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## On the Cover

Gracing thls month's cover is the artwork for the Pegasus Stampede card by Mark Zug from Magie's upcoming Exodus set. For a sneak peek at a whole bunch of Exodus cards, turn to page 30.

## PRTCE \& PAMARGGUDAN

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## BH:INDDIEHNHS Never a Dull Moment



GTive me a foosball and I'm happy. Around Tithe office here, foosball- $y^{\prime}$ know, the tabletop game where little plastic guys spin to whack a plastic ball into the opposing soccer goalis all the rage. We've got 16 teams in the Wizard Foosball League-Justice League and Injustice League divisions-and to get your name etched on a spiffy Stanley Cup-like trophy, you have to rough it out over a 12-week season, plus three rounds of grueling playoffs.

It was easier when I was a kid; I just kicked a real soccer ball around. And if I couldn't round up enough guys in the neighborhood to head up to the ball field to score some goals, I broke out the ol' rawhide mitt and chucked a baseball against the cement wall in front of my house. I even managed to zink it inside the chalk strike zone once in a while. For those rainy surnmer days when my friends and I were trapped inside, our family Atari served as the local arcade and we took turns launching Ponglike missiles at each other from our blockgraphic Combat tanks. By the time I was atlowed to ride my bike around town, I had scraped up enough change to visit our local drugstore and buy my first Uncanny X-Men comic book; I've been hooked on those fourcolor slugfests ever since.

My teenage years were devoted to $D \& D$. After hearing of a fantasy game where you could play any hero you imagined, I rushed out and scored one of the early blue boxes,
pre-dice, with a bunch of cardboard counter chits to represent numbers. As high school approached, I had discovered other roleplaying games-Champions, Top Secret, Gamma World. Girls weren't too bad either.

You might ask yourself where all this is leading. I ask myself that same question every time I sit down to write one of these things. My point is: variety. Variety has made my life interesting, exciting, fun. Everyday's a new joy. I mean, how much fun is it to experience the same things over and over and over again?

The same idea can be applied to gaming: Go out and try a different game whenever you get a chance. That's how we discovered the current inQuest favorites-the Doomtown CCG, the Titan: The Arena card game, the legend of the Five Rings RPG-and I'm sure that over time our favorites will change. Whether you buy that cool new game on the sheff or play your friend's closet classic, a different game each week will keep things fresh and prevent boredom from killing your gaming group. I'm not saying you should abandon your favorites, but l'd rather play back-to-back games of imajico and Spellifire than a 1,000 straight games of Magic.


Editor

## INSIDEMIVIRAD MIKE SEARIE

Position: Editor and staff sargeon.
Piysical Stuff: 5'11". 170 lbs. Blee gyes, Bload hair. Optional beard.
Inteilectual Stuff: it marginally greater than current $l($ issee mamber.
Games Im playing, Mggic, Doomfomi, L5R, Ufiliga Onfise, Fitar: The Arena, Tis Tac Tee.
Sports l'm playing: Rolierbiading, fuaning, liking, softball...and I wish I was in better shape.
Booksl'm readings Robert Jordan's "Wheel of Tine" series, J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings," Ptilip K. Dick's The Man in the Migh Bastle and anything Dr. Setiss.
Music I'm listening to: Sapak Melachlan, Love Spit Love's Trysome Fatom, Fry in the Sianglarkonse's Mose, bollective Soal and the sonadtrack to "Matropelis."

## EDITORIAL

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AT INQUEST
Man, this has been a rough month. First, we got a big stack of letters pointing out an error in issue \#36's "Blast from the Past." (Gary Adams in Bloomington, MN: "There were four editions of Gamma World, not three. Aren't you ashamed?"). Next, for some reason, we got umpteen missives in praise of Spellfire (Spellfire?). But worst of all, ot the bottom of the mailbag, reeking of mouse waffles, was this note: "I AM LEVING YOU TO PLAV IN THE SPELFIRE INTERPLANATERY CHAMPINSHIP. GETT BENT. YOR FREN, COW NOSE."

Sob ...!

## SMELLFIRE

I play many CCGs, including Magic, Stor Wors, Mythos, Legend of the Five Rings and Aliens/Predator. But my favorite is Spellfire. I had to write this in response to the inaccurate, ignorant and ridiculous comments made about this great game. Spellfire is easy, inexpensive and fun. I have personally introduced Spellfire to approximately 20 people, who now play and purchase it on a regular basis. In fact, most often, the Spellfire tournaments at the local fantasy game store outdraw the Magic tournaments by a $2: 1$ ratio. And this is in a city with a large Magic following.

Michael Papineou-Couture
Alberta, Canoda

## PENPAIS

Gel in touch with your follow game fans! Send your pante, addfess, e-mail address (ff you've got one), uge, gender and litree fovarile games to 1QPenPab@ud com or mail a to us ot L.Q. Pen Pals, C/o Induest, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, HY 10920. Moke a lriend!


Spelifire gets a lot of phay value bere at the effice.
Are you kidding? I play with my Spellfire cards all the time. Watch this. One ...

I've been playing Spelfire since the game first hit the market. I'm also an established trader on the net and have contacted several other Spellfire-ers in regard to our chosen hobby, You might be interested to know that there have been four editions and 11 expansions, and that cards from the first edition are rising in value simply because no one held on to them. All chase set cards (numbered 1-25 and 401-440) are considered the rarest of the rare and sell for about $\$ 5-\$ 20$ each. TSR also issued three promo cards which were available only at GenCon. These cards sell for about \$10-\$30 each.

> Aaron Kelley
> Bainbridge, GA

... two, three ...

Spellfire rules. InQuest, on the other hand-let me see, how should I put this-bites.

Lee Chappel
Mesa, AZ
... four ... oh damn! It fell over.

## MEXICAN TO GO

My family was taking a trip to a resort in Mexico. My brother and I realized we could not go that long without Magic or, for that matter, inQuest. Therefore, we loaded up a backpack with Magic cards and your magazine. After the flight, we were driven by van to our destination. Upon our arrival, in my eagerness to check out what would be my home for the next week, 1 left the backpack in the van. My collection vanished.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not bitter. I'm hoping that, at the very least, I helped to spread my two favorite things, Magic and inQuest, around the world.

Tyler Woftus
Greenfield, WI
You mean, at this very moment, InQuest might be serving as a coaster in some slimy Mexican tequila bar? Cool!

## DREAM DATE

I'm responding to the guy a couple of issues back who was bitching about females not playing games. There are those of us out here who play RPGs, CCGs, wargames, computer games and regular old card games who think the rest of the general female population are a bunch of driveling brainless idiots. I would hypoth-

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DEM IRUONS

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417 1/2 Wबa Given STrew
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## KIITY NAHFBR

AMARDED EACH MOHTH TO A LETIER THAT TICKLED OUR FHMCY FOR MO APPARENT RESSOH


Every spring, a few of the girls and I take a poll of all the magazines we see the guys carrying at school. The magarine that looks the best to us becomes "Chosen Mas of the Year.n Our plan is to buy every issue until we select another Chosen Mag for the next twelve month period.

This year's number three favorito was Popular Scionco. Inguest came in at number two. Number one was Sporis mustrated. However, after a few issues, we've fimally decided that Sports Mlisstrated sucks. All you swe in Sports Illustrated are guys with oversized muscles running around in spandex and sirls who could be labeled as artificial life forms because of all the plastic surgery done to enhance their bodies. InOuast, therefore, is batter, making it our Ghosen Mag of the Year. So pat yourselves on the back for a job well done.
oh yeah, one more thing We love you, Cow Nose!

Jemy S. and the Bats of Paradox
Gharlotte, NC
Doss this mean wo can't run a picture of Bow Nose in spandex?
esize that the general female population is like this because their parents, along with society, teach them from birth that it's okay to fit into the driveling brainless idiot mold.

Perhaps all of you complaining guys ought to go to a bunch of game shops in cities whenever they host tournaments. I'm sure you'd find some non-stereotypical females.

By the way, I've bought more edged weapons in the past four years than articles of clothing.

Kathryn Dotter<br>Norman, OK

You must be quite a challenging date.

## WHO KILLED MAGIC?

I have determined there are two types of Mogic people: the players and the collectors. Players try new cards in their decks just to see what they'll do. They build weird theme decks just for the fun of it. Collectors, on the other hand, buy as many expensive cards as they can. They would rather trade than play. They usually have only one, maybe two decks. Collectors also complain about Wizards of the Coast reprinting, restricting or banning their hard-to-get cards.

My friend says that players ruin the game. I say that, to collectors, Magic isn't a game at all but rather a variation on sports card collecting. Collectors are ruining Magic because if one of the big money cards they own is reprinted, they sell out and abandon the game. You will almost never see a player sell out because his card got reprinted. Players, not collectors, are what will keep this game alive.

Monte W. Lewis
Show Low, AZ
Actually, there's a third type: the subhumon anthropoids who scream and howl and beat their chests and ... wait a sec. Those are pro wrestlers.

## STAR WORRIER

A while back, I read somewhere that Decipher will be publishing a set of cards based on the forthcoming "Star Wars" prequel. Then I read somewhere that this is only a
rumor. Well, which the hell is it? Find out. Tell us. Now.

## Jeff Musingo

Ocala, fl
Yes sirl Sez Matt Mariani, Decipher Marketing Director: "We definitely, absolutely have the prequel license, and well be publishing sometime in 1999. We have the option of creating a brand new game; we're playing around with that right now."

## SPELL CHEKER

In your "Riddle Me This" feature (InQuest \#36), I found that once decoded, the secret message under the subtitle "Ciphers" is this: "CTHULU IS IN BASEMENT." Please note that the name "Cthulhu" is misspelled. All I ask is that you follow your own advice next time and check the spelling before publishing.

## Daniel Lindefl

Des Moines, IA
Wrong! The secret message refers to the Wizard Entertainment plumber, Irving Cthulu.

## WHINE AND ROSES

I'm tired of all these whiners complaining about "I can't afford any Moxes" or "I can't afford the Black Lotus." I have a solution for you. Go out and get Duel of the Planeswalkers from Microprose for the personal computer. You get all the Moxes and Black Lotuses you want, you get a ranking against other players and you get to play on-line. Everyone has access to the same cards and, what's more, you get to go up against a ton of different decks and opponents.

## Fronobulak

silicon Valley, CA
Let's see ... a couple of thousand for a computer, 50 bucks for the game, maybe 20 a month for an on-line service ... hey, what a great money-saving idea!

## DORKISM

How come people into gaming say they're not dorks? I'm a dork, you're a dork, we're all dorks! And who gives a rat's ass what

| ADAM SOSARGE |
| :---: |
| Age: 17 Sex: 1 |
| III30 Pioneer Rond |
| Theodere, AL 36582 |
| Likes: ADr0, Star Wors RPG, |
| Vampie: The Masque |

ELLLOT ADDESSO Age: 14 5ex 11 341 linabarry Rood Yiginina Bead, VK 23452 tikes Stow Wers (tG

> FARA WASSERMAN Kge. 13 Sec: F 3748 Pendidury Orive Palm tiarbor, 1134885 1ithe Alogit

## AKIRA GALUMORE Aga: 23 Sex:K 2027 Denton Rood Denlon, HC. 27239 titer Magic. Hewemolit Rege tC6, Werwall: The Apocilypse

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ARAT SCHAFFEL Age: 15 Sex:H 133 Westem Cres. Soskotoon 5K, Cenodr 57M-44 thess. Mogic
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> JOMATARA CLIFTON Age: 18 Sex: 16 361 Kounly Roas 607 Forl Poyne, AL 35968 Likes: Mogk, Star Wars !C6


## T0: Say You'll Be Thare, Spice Girls fan club London, England

Dear Folks:
I'm an artist for Wizards of the Coast. I'm interested in hiring one of the Spice Girls to pose for a picture on one of our playing cards, maybe Coffin Queen op Servant of Volrath. I'm not really after any particufar girl, so whichever one you'd recommend I'm sure I could use, except maybe Scary Spice because she's too creepy.

Yours truly,
Rick Swan
Well, there is absolutely no way you can hire a Spice Girl. Just use photos of them. I think Posh Spice would make a good Coffin Queen and Baby Spice could be a Sorvant of Voirath.
lan Mann
Say Vou'll Be There
we look like? Does this mean that buttweasel Joe Coleman ("NOT-A-DORK," "InQuisition," InQuest \#35) who says he isn't a dork and claims he looks like Brad Pitt is any better than other gamers? No. He's the same. He plays a dork game. Therefore, he is a dork. All the ugly or fat people are obviously dorks, but so are the suave-type people. Don't you think?

## A.). Klousing

New York, NY
Interesting question. I was going to ask the suave-types on the InQuest staff, but they were busy force-feeding doughnuts to themselves, then attempting to autograph paychecks with the upchucked Boston cream. So I'Il ask them later.

## STORY TIME

I think Magic is the best CCG out there. When I first started playing with my friends, I thought it was a kid's game, but after awhile I started to get into it. Now, I see a little story in my head every time I play, like I picture a big huge wall blocking my ground creatures. What do you see in your heads when you play?

Mund Deyarmin
Altoona, PA
Well, I see myself doing a nude cha-cha in front of 100 jeering Serra Angles. But that's just me.

ICH BIN EIN SCHWEIN
Here, for your enjoyment, are a few of your favorite phrases translated into German.

ENGLISH
Cow Nose the Cat
buttweasel
Rick Swine
GERMAN
Kuh Nase die Katze ashwiesel Rick Schwein

## Bob Stevens

New York, NY
Danke, Hert Ashwiesel.

## BLANKENSTEIN

I just reread all of my back issues of InQuest. I like to remember what I was doing when 1 first heard Princess Di was dead or, more importantly, when Ice Age was banned from Type II. I'm going to start keeping a journal in all the blank spots in the mag, so when I look back,

I can see what I was doing when different things were going on. You know, if you left a blank page or two in every issue, it'd be easier for readers to record the details of their lives in their favorite magazine.

Ben Feist<br>Nellsville, W/I

Coming soon: the all-blank InQuest, featuring a pin-up of the Air Elemental, a behind-the-scenes peek ot the Invistble Stalker and, of course, the top 10 Spellfire cards.

## KISS ME, MARILYN

1 am a longtime dice-chucker and cardflipper, and what people say about Magic being the work of the devil is just preposterous. The people who made Magic a success should be given a nice pat on the back and a handshake. At my school, you can't take roleplaying sheets, Magic cards or dice to school. If you do, you get detention or sent to
 the office. Most of my teachers don't even approve of reading InQuest, probably because of Rick Swine ... uh, Swan. Also, people think Marilyn Manson plays Magic because it's satanic.

Wayne Giles<br>Independence, MO

Boy, are they stupid. Everybody knows Marilyn Manson plays Magic because of the naked pictures.

## SWIPING SWAN

My sister adores Rick Swan's "Swan Song" section. The bad thing is, she keeps taking my magazine. Could you move it from the back of the mag to the front or the middie or even one page over? Then she couldn't find it.

Frank Olmstead
Indianapolls, IN
We'll do better than that. On your copy of the next issue, we'll print the entire thing-get this-upside down.

It's always darkest just before the dawn... ar just before you fail through a superdense hole in space. Although we personally would've pletured Maximillian from the 1970s Disney movie "The Black Hole," James Kight of Winston-Salent will score a couple of the Stronghold preconstructed decks for his own particular vision.


BLAGK HOLE
James Kight
Winsten-Salem, NG


- "Oh baby Oh baby Oh baby..." At least, these are the sweet nothings that we around the bullpen think Jabba was speaking softly in Leia's ear (nibble, nibble) for the "What's Jabba Whispering?" contest. Jay Earle of Decatur, Ga, saw things differently. He walks-or in Jabba's case, silithers-away with a complete set of the new Jabba's Palace expansion for the Star Wars CC6. Additionally, 15 other Jedi-wannabes scored a Ban-tha-load of boosters.
- Man! That's a crapload of AD\&D stuff! Everything related to dragens, dungeons or both that comes out from TSR in 1998 will go to Matt Konnington of Talking Pock, ©a. He proved himself to be a walking arsenal in our "Arm Yourseif" contest and walks away with the grand prize. Seven other potential bad-asses wound up with a bunch of Jakandor swas and AD\&D CD-ROMs.


## BALANCING ACT

I used to be one of those diehard Magic fans who thought it was the best thing since sliced bread. Then, right after Homelands came out, I was exposed to Middle-earth: The Wizards. And you know what? Middle-earth is a much better game. Why? Because it's balanced. In Magic, there are cards so powerful, they wreck the game. Sure, there are powerful cards in Middie-earth, but every card has a counter card. The One Ring can win you the game, but there are a ton of commons that can stop it. The Will of Sauron may seem too powerful, but again, a simple common card can get rid of it, providing a much better playing experience.

Ell Margolese-Malln
Chapel HIII, NC
Middle-earth is pretty good, but I don't know if I'd call it balanced. For instance, f once tried to perch the Will of Sauron on Cow Nose's snout, but the damn thing kept falling off.

## NOW YOU SEE IT

I was thumbing through issue \#36 and happened to notice a mention of Meta-Deck Protectors on page 102. There were some nice cards lined along the bottom in Deck Protector sleeves. Let's see, we have Chaos Orb, City of Brass, Demonic Tutor, Savannah and... what's this? Sauron?!? One of your "Legends of Lore" characters from issue \#29! Nice try, you Meta-Weenies.

Rob Rouland
Vlenna, Austria
Okay, you caught us. But did you happen to notice the Invisible Stalker just to the right of the Choos Orb?

## SOUP'S ON

I love Rick Swan. One day a year, I eat a swan in his honor.

## Tlago Ferreira

Faro, Portugal
Good thing my name isn't "Rick Rottingsowguts."

## CUTIE PIE

How come Mike Searle is the only cute guy at inQuest?
Kate Griffin
Carlsbad, CA
Okay, maybe Mike's the cutest. But when it came to Miss Congeniality, I kicked his ass.

> Well, well, what's this? Cow Nose has dragged her mangy butt back home! Guess there isn't such as thing as a "Spelfire Interplanatery Champinship." And it looks Bike I'm going to have to spend the weekend teaching that dumb cat to spel. See ya next time!

[^0]SPECLAL RBPORT
Pro Tour: New York. Page 16.


Roleplaying Bible. Page 18.


New Edition Fever. Page 24.

## PLUS:

- Nebula Award Winners. Page 18.
- RPG Meets Wall Street. Page 22.


# Buildinga Better BattleTech 

TThe BottleTech Trading Card Game (TCG) is getting a spiffy new paint job. This july Wizards of the Coast will release the Commander's Edition, a version of the basic set with completely redesigned cards.
"This is the game we ideally would have put out the first time around," said Assistant Brand Manager Michael Brooks. The Commander's Edition is the third release of the basic game, following the limited and unlimited versions. However, it's much more than a reprint set. While it includes cards from the original sets, there are also cards from the first four expansions. Cards that were broken or less useful were rotated out to make room for the new cards.

To better capture the feel of FASA's BattleTech universe, the new cards have more dynamic layouts and color has been added to liven up the backgrounds and to make it easier to distinguish cards by type. But the new set-which will premiere at the Origins
 high-tech future the game takes place in. Game Fair in july-has much more than just cosmetic changes.

WotC has also adopted more user-friendly packaging. Cards are available in either semipreconstructed starter decks or randomized booster packs. There are eight starter decks-four Clan (Ghost Bear, Jade Falcons, Smoke Jaguar and Wolf) and four Inner Sphere (ComStar, Davion, Korita and Steiner). Each starter deck contains a factionspecific card; these "high command" cards are only available in starters. With each starter deck you also receive a six-sided die, metal counters and a full-size rulebook. The
new rulebooks include original fiction that gives insight into the factions and their part in the BattleTech universe. The 60 -card starters will retail for $\$ 8.99$ and 15 -card booster packs for $\$ 2.99$.

Another new addition to the game are homeworlds. The back of each starter box now represents that faction's homeworld. As in the games Doomtown and Legend of the Five Rings, you begin the game with your starter box in play and it grants your faction a strategic advantage.

Also, in an effort to bring players more into the established BattleTech universe, the setting of the card game is now tied directly into what FASA is doing with their BattleTech games. The card mix and flavor text in the Commander's Edition update the game to the year 3058 and future expansions will correspond with FASA's latest plot lines.

Wizards of the Coast is committed to giving the BattleTech TCG full support. Over the next few months there will be numerous sanctioned tournaments, including a series of national and international, culminating in the 1998 World Championships, which will be held this August at GenCon. Crusade, the first expansion to follow the redesign, is due out in November.

So how does all this affect players who own the old cards? Not much. The card backs are the same, making the sets fully interchangeable. More importantly, the pre-constructed starter decks should help bring more players into the game. "This is the point for new players to pick their faction and get in on the action," said Brooks. EiBlif Hannes

## SPEGIAL REPOR

## PROTOURNEW YORK Finkel... Finally

While preparing for Pro Tour New York at a local game shop one of the younger players asked me: "Who's the best player in the world?" I responded with: "It's tough to say whether there is any one player who is better than the rest, but l'd say jon Finkel is the most consistent." He wasn't satisfied with my answer, commenting, "But he hasn't even won a Pro Tour."

As the saying goes: That was then, this is now. Jon Finkel finally scored a Pro Tour win at Pro Tour New York held the weekend of 17-19 April, 1998.

Six times previously Finkel, 19, from Fanwood, New jersey, had made the top 32 of a Pro Tour event, reaching as high as the semifinals of Pro Tour Chicago. But it took until the third Pro Tour held in the Big Apple for him to win the big one. "I can't believe I finally did it. I was feeling a lot of pressure," he said after winning.

Held at The Armory in Manhattan, Magic Pro Tour New York featured a booster draft format using two packs of Tempest and one pack of Stronghold for each draft round. Over three days, the top eight finishers had to draft five times.

Through the 14 rounds of Swiss-style play, Finkel went 12-1-1 and became the first player ever to win a Pro Tour when seeded first going into the top eight. He drafted blue and black at the end and made good use of the power cards Grave Pact and Tradewind Rider. "I was pretty lucky that I opened two really powerful rares in the colors I like," Finkel said about the final draft.


Finkel, now sporting oraage liaip, faced Dominiek Grapuchattes in the final matcin.

His finals game against Dominick Crapuchettes was not close. The most important match of the tournament turned out to be a semi-final match against his long-time hometown rival David Bachmann, who was making his second semifinal appearance in a row. Bachmann had managed an extremely powerful draft deck including cards like Rolling Thunder, Lightning Blast and Fanning the Flames. Finkel won a very close game five when he drew a Rats of Rath, whose ability to destroy its owner's artifacts, creatures or land combos very well with Grave Pact, which forces your opponent to destroy

JON FINKEES TOP EICHT DRAFT DEGK

B1:BX<br>glot Siviver<br>Poprion<br>Dauitin Horeor<br>Datbolir Elim<br>Evintar's distibe Faillimp Grave Paibit<br>Aravedisger ( C 2) Keraedix<br>Spinal Creat Torment Swamp ( $x$ )

# Roleplayer's Bible to Return 

Dalladium Books, publishers of RPGs like Rifts, will release the second edition of The Fantasy Role-Playing Gamer's Bible early next year. "Bible" author and gaming insider Sean Patrick Fannon jokingly describes his book as "Everything you ever wanted to know about gaming, but thought you'd sound like a geek if you asked," and he's thrilled that it's finally returning to print.

Originally published by Prima in 1996, The Fantasy RolePlaying Gamer's Bible was only distributed to major retail bookstores, rather than game stores, so it never reached its real audience. "Once I got the rights back, I was actually thinking of putting the whole manuscript on-line someplace, just so people could finally see it," Fannon said. "Then Kevin Siembieda (president of Palladium Books) approached me about updating it and publishing a second edition."

In addition to covering roleplaying basics, the book includes a history of the RPG business and a "game-opedia" of RPGs and gamer slang. Fannon said, "I wanted it to be fun instead of the usual dry list."

The new edition will include an updated history, with significant reorganization and revision of other sections. At this time, format and price haven't been determined. Eharlene Brusso

Everything you ever wanted to know ahout poleplaying but folt too greaky to ask.


## Best of Science Fiction

TThe Nebula Awards for the best science fiction writing of 1997 were presented the evening of May 2 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Unlike the Hugo Awards, which are voted on by fans, the Nebulas are voted on by the members of the Science fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA).

More than 200 SF writers, editors and publishers packed the banquet room of the Hotel Santa Fe for this year's bash. Spirits were high-in spite of a failure in the hotel's air conditioning system. Attendees dined on buffalo steak and other Native American dishes, then sat back nervously for the awards. Allen Steele, whose novella "...Where Angels Fear To Tread" was on the ballot for Best Novella, echoed the sentiments of several other nominees when he said, "If I win, I plan to get royally drunk. Even more so if I lose. ${ }^{\text {" }}$

Craig Engler of SF Weekly noted that all the nominees were especially strong this year. No one was willing to go out on a limb and predict who would win. The only "sure" thing was that venerable best-selling author Poul Anderson would be named as Grand Master: a title granted by SFWA to the most successful writers in the field.

When it was over, Vonda McIntyre had captured the Best Novel Nebula for The Moon and The Sun, an alternate history set in the court of King Louis XIV. jerry Oltion's "Abandon In Place," a story about a ghost-rocket that revitalizes the U.S. Space Program, won for Best Novella. E Charlene Brusso



## Cantrippin'

Cantrips are cards which-while not a primary functionallow players of the card to draw a card. Spelis like Ancestral Hecall of Braingeyser are not cantrips because these have drawing as their primary function. They do include cards like fouch of Vitae and Abeyance, both of which do something besides allowing you to draw a card.
$\begin{gathered}\text { Nofor } \begin{array}{c}\text { Average il } \\ \text { Power Rating }\end{array}\end{gathered}=x$ Number


TOTAL
72

- TomHuskey


## MAHC Phaviz OH THILMONHI

JON FINKEL, 19, from Fanwaod, liew dersay
DGI STANDARD RAONG: 2021 (Bth in worid)
SECRET OF MY SUCCESSR I just like playing Magic a little too much for my own good. I also have an analytical mind, which is good for Magic.
FAVORITE COM8 IN Booster DRatr? I don't usually like combos In booster draft, so I'd have to say my favorite combo is Spinal Graft(s) with multiple targeting permanents. It makes Spinal Graft into a very versatile card.
MOST POWERFUL CARD IN STAMDARD? Cursed Scroll

## FAVORITE TV SHOWP Seinfeld

KHUNA CAR I DRNV 92 Mitsubishi Mirage IF I WERE AN ANIMAL I'D BE AN: Eagie. Being able to fly would be amazing.
BIO W BRIEF: Bon't panic! Yes, Jon Finkel's smiling face stared out at you from this space a mere two months ago. But Inguest isn't doing rearuns. It's just that Jon is the first player to twice rank as inluests magic Player of the flenth. You last saw him here in issue \#37 after he'd won the Rio
 De Janeira (Brazil) Braud Prix, Well, he's here again after winning Pro Tour New York this past April (see this issue's Special Report on page 16). Finkel now has 12 Pro Tours (tinree as a junior) to his credit and has accumslated ounoug Pro Tour points to assure him a spot at this hugust's world championships.

## Game Companies Going Exclusive

Petting your hands on the latest Xena RPG module, Middje-
Bearth CCG expansion or Dark Conspiracy sourcebook may have just gotten tougher. The companies that make these products have all announced exclusive distribution deals.

Ken Whitman, president of Archangel Entertainment, publishers of the Groo card game and Zero and Dark Conspiracy RPGs, said at the Game Manufacturers Association (GAMA) trade show that Archangel plans to distribute exclusively through Chessex in the United States.

Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE), publishers of the Middile-earth and Warlords CCGs, also announced a distnbution deal with Chessex but it's " a hybrid posture," according to ICE president Peter Fenlon. "We're not going exclusive, we're more or less going direct using Berkeley and Chessex as fulfillment partners," he said.

And West End Games is also making a move. "We have signed an exclusive deal with Chessex," West End Games President Scott Palter said, "but it is for Hercules and Xena [RPGs] only."

Why are game companies making these moves? According to Palter, "We've changed our method of selling from passive to active. I belreve this will give us better sales, especialiy


To gat ICE products like the Middle-8arth CAR petailess will have to go thrpogh Chessex, Berkeley op deal directly with IEE.
of backlist, and also will give us better in-store support." Fenlon agreed, saying: "The gamer is going to see more demos and more product."

Steve Jackson of Steve Jackson Games disagrees. "it's hard' for me to believe that they could be getting better sales or service by refusing to sell to other distributors," he said. "But I don't know the terms of the deals."

Palter admits that the deal may have some pitfalls, such as the loss of business from other distributors, but is confident that it will ultimately result in "better distribution, with more intelligent marketing partnerships of manufacturers, distributors and retailers."

Bottom line-what does this mean for gaming tans? "There may be fewer stores with our products," Palter admits. "But the stores that do carry our line will offer much better product selection, in-store support and events," he said.
"It will probably make some of their games harder to find," counters Jackson. "Retailers who don't find the right distributor just won't have the line." \# Chuck Beinar\&TomSizewskl

## BASISMAMRIS



1. Magio: The Gathering
2. Babylon 5

3, Star Hars
4. Legend of the Five Bings
5. Afiens/Predator
6. BattieTech
7. Stap Trok: THE
8. Shadowrun
9. Midalle-8arth
10. Highlander

11: 1 in'R

1. Advanced Dungeons \& Dragons
2. Vampire
3. Bifts
4. Star Wars: The RPG
5. Shadowran
6. Deadlands
7. GUPBS
8. Werewoff
9. Mage
10. Trintiy


## RPG Meets Wall Street

e peculative fiction is taking on a whole new meaning at issaries Corpo--ration, which is selling "stock" in its new Glorantha roleplaying game. Founded this past February by Chaosium president Greg Stafford, Issaries Corp. was set up to bring back one of roleplaying's first worlds: Clorantha, setting of the original RuneQuest RPG released in 1977.
"Glorantha is a unique fantasy world whose deep mythological basis- accumulated for over 22 years of writing-offers depths unparalieled in fantasy literature," says Stafford. His

"But officerr, suapping Gilorantha supplements isn't inasider trading." plan calls for Issaries to debut the newcomer-friendly Gforantha: An Introduction, by Stafford and Rob Heinsoo in January 1999. Spring 1999 should see The Hero Wars, a Glorantha-based RPG by Robin Laws (Shadowfist, Feng Shui). "This is the game we used to call HeroQuest," says Stafford, referring to the nigh-legendary game originally announced in 1978. Regular bimonthly supplements and a licensed computer game arrive later in 1999.

Issaries, named for the Gloranthan god of trade and communication, hopes to raise the money it needs by selling $\$ 100$ shares of stock to Glorantha's loyad "tribe" of fans. Interested? Act fast: A thousand shares will be sold, and Stafford says he has already received more than 500 inquiries. Check out Issaries' website at http://www.giorantha.com/issaries.html or contact Stafford at (510) 595-2440 (serious inquiries only). Beth Fiscel

## HIASH FROM ITH: PREST

NAME: TUNNELS \& TROLLS
ORIGIN: Flying Buffalo, 1975
TVPE: Fantasy roleplaying game
CONCEPT: Roleplaying is fun, number-Grunching isn't. T\&T was targeted at people who liked the idea of roleplaying but hated the math. Wost monsters have only one number, you use only six-sided dice and cumbersome mechaniss like weapon speed modifiers and alignment don't exist.
REGACY: Simplicity and creativity. IET was the first non-TSR roleplaying game and didn't get much support. To make a T\&T campaign sing the CM had to be creative by making up his own adventures, monsters, magic items or liberally borrowing and adapting them from better supported systems. But since the game's mechanics are so simple this wasn't difficult. I\&T was also the first RPG to have solitaire (and often whimsical) adventures released for it. To date more than 30 such adventures have been published.
AV AbLABjaITY: The 5th edition, published in 1979, is widely available and can still be ordered directly from the publisher at (602) 9456917 or www.flyingbuffalo.com © TomSlizewski


- Decipher's Star Wars CCG Specidu kition exparsion, due aut in liovernber, will have fixed slater detts and be playoblde out of the box. It will a so andude the long-awoined secoind edition rules.
- Decipher is spensaring beginner tournaments for the Star Wars CtG. New ployers only will heve acceess to the toernaments. But Decipher is inviting established ployers to tolke paratin the event tos "mentiors" for new players. The wirning player ond "mentor" from each tournament will win exclusive prizes and be eatlered in odrawing For an oll-6xpense paid trit to Decipher HQ.
- Coctus Game Design is ploaning to rework the storier decks of its bibicicol (CG Redemptionwith new ond improved cords, prior to the releuse of their next expussion, Worriors.
a Steve Jodson fumes (SIG) manouncod is developurg a Cups CD-ROM.
- The next expansion to SUG's illuminati CCG will be titled Bovarian Fire Drill ond is due out this Hovember.
- This winter, Attivision is planningy lo release on action/RPG C0-ROH game bessed on Five Rings Publishing's popular card and roteplaying game L5R. Titiled Legend of the Five Rings: Ronin, ployars take the role of a young samurrii who nuss travel Io seven cities, Ifoining in magit and the fighling art of Keniulsu, to rebuild on orlifaci hital will help defeol on avil creature.

Red Orb Entertonnment is developing a 3D sequel to Prince of Persia, for relonse sarly nextyear.

- Pyygnos's will relerse a sequel to the तlossis strotegy game Sentine/ Ihis August, for tha Sony Playstotion and PC, which filmmaker John Carpenter \{"Halloween," "Escapa from New Yark") wills scone.
- Virgin inferoctive's upcoming action-shooter Recoil puls you in control of a fulurisicic velicice that con merph between a ropid-molion łank, hovercrofit, emplibious war machine and submersible.
- The creators of $\mathcal{K}$-COM are wasking on Virgin Interative's Duel: The Mage Wors, a PC gome where players must leorn to summan creotures to survive on allernale reality. 36 players will be able to compele agoinst one enother in Duel.
- Interplay will release Stor Irek. Starfies Command, the first-ever Stor Trek strolegy game for the PC. The redr-line game uses footoge froin the chassie "Sfar Trok" TV series and Films, and allows gumers to compete as Federation, Klingon, Romulan, or other unrevealed roces, in single or mulli-phyer games. Interplay will olso release the Klistyon version of its Slorfleet Academy series, Kingon Acadeny, lhis Otober.

Dengonlante crealars Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman recently turned in the first manuscript for their new epic fantasy Irilogy to Del Rey, and have begun wriling the third novel in the Starshuefd series.

Game company Imterplay has a new film division working on bringing Its popular video games fo the screen. Gomes thol stand a dhance of being turned info TV or film projects indude Descents, Stomakeep, Carmageddon, Rednexk Rampoge, and Followt.

- WIT hos pitked up the Oliver Stoneexeculive produred Witchblode series, based on Top Cow's comic series of the same name. Look for il to debus in the '98-99 season, wilh a two-hour episode.

NBC was unable io find a leading lady for is Warder Womanseries, and hos pushed irs launch back to midseason' 99.
-Som Hemm, writer of the first 80 mon film, hos been brought in to re-write the Fantustic Four feature film that Chris ("Home Alone," "Mrs. Doubtifire") Columbus is see to direct for Fox.

Worner Bros. is fumored to be considering casting Kuut Russell wi its nexit Botman film.

Worner Bros. hos shelved its live-* action Sypernave (imm, blaming is $\$ 125+$ million budget, and script problems.

Joss whedon is developing a spinoff series to "Buffy the Vompire Slayer" for the WB Hawwark.

Universol is developing of feature Film bosed on Roy Brodbury's scifi novel "The Mortian Chronides," for releose in 1999 Republic Pictures has launched a website for its video relesse of he fox vempire series "Kindred: The Embroced," besed on the White Woll's Vompire myythos. Fons can gel info on the charrocters, clans, storylines, ond info on the unaired episode. www.kididredent com

- Fox hos ordered 13 gpisades of a new onimated series from "Simpsons" creafor Moll Groening tifled "Futurama." Expected to premieare offer next yeor's Super Bow, il's o sci-lic comedy about on Eurth man frozen in linse, who wokes up hundrads of years in the future and teans up with a group of oliens.
- "South Park" creators Trey Posker and Mall Stone have renegotiated their comfroct with Comedy Central, guaranteeing their involvement with the show For of least mother 50 episodes, well through the year 2000
- Parker ond Stone are atso currenty werking on a "South Pak" feature flon, which they guarantoe will carry un $R$ nuting.
-By Sear (Saarlordaneadicoma)
Jordag ithe infuest staff


# New Edition Fever Strikes 

This year, everything old is new again. As the millemum draws to a close, game companies are polishing up their lines and releasing new editions of classic games. Shadowrun, RuneQuest, Vampire and even mainstays like Call of Cthulhu and BottleTech are being reworked. But why the sudden rush to rewrite?

One thing it has little to do with is the rules. Although specific systems might be changed, like the magic rules for both Call of Cthuthu and Shadowrun, or the virtues in Vampire, the owning companies were all quick to insist that the new versions would be completely compatible with earlier ones. Most wish to avoid the words "new edition," fearing it suggests flaws in the prior version; the polite term is "revised and updated."

So why "revise and update?" The big reason is the march of time-both fictional and real. Games like Vompire and Shadowrun have constructed elaborate settings over the past decade and the redesign is a chance to take the changes that have occured into account. The inception date for the new Shadowrun is several years after the previous edition's, allowing new characters to look back on previous books as history. New alien races in Call of Cthulhu will allow for more modern play.

Meanwhile, in the real world, games fall prey to "knowledge creep." As time goes on, more information becomes available about a game in various supplements, requiring


Shadomrun 3red fextures new cover art. The first new cever since 1989. new players to buy dozens of books. A new edition puts all those important rules in one place, According to Rett Kipp of FASA, a new edition also serves as an entry point for new players.

The other rea. son for new editions is artistic overhaul. Everyone wants the chance to redo old art and tired writing. Eric Rowe of Chaossum said that the not-quite-Sixth Edition of Call of Cthulhu will be reorganized and also contain a copy of the short story by H.P. Lovecraft that gave the game its name.

But why are all of these companies releasing their revised editions now? Every company denied any particular connection other than coincidence. "It just seemed like the right time," said White Wolf's Greg Fountain. Rowe offered a more practical reason: "We used up the last of our print run." Kipp confided, "Frankly, we had to." - Jason Sehneiderman Ff Wizards of the Coast's dream to make gaming as big as the movies is going to come true, there will have to be movie theater-like franchises. Neutral Ground hopes to be the first of these.

The well-known East Coast tournament and game center has announced it is merging with two other leading tournament centers located in Georgia and California. No More Kings, Inc, the operator of Neutral Ground in New York, has united with "Match Play" of San Francisco and "The Warzone" of Atlanta under the Neutral Ground label.
"I feel that Neutral Ground is probably the most valuable intellectual property in garning next to Magic: The Gathering," said David Doust of the new Neutral Ground: Atlanta. "This will enable us to combine three of the most well-known entities in the site-based entertainment business to create the first ever national tournament center chain."

The new-found franchise is already looking to expand. Neutral Ground has amnounced it is looking for more qualified sites to join under its banner. Affiliates will enjoy discounts on gaming merchandise and share in other benefits of allying oneself with a "name" business.

Will the future see a Neutral Ground franchise in every neighborhood? If WotC realizes its dream, they'll be there right next to the multiplex. Alex Shartsman

## MAGIC UPDATES <br> REVERSALS

- Proviously, moving an mehantment from cme pernazent to another with Growa of the Ages or Enchantment Afteration wauld sause it to te frentel as theugh it was just esst. This rule has hear repeaied. You no longor gat to play Foog Tougue's coming-into-alay ability or shaose a uaw celor for Miril of Lights When these enchantrants ape moved.
 source's soatrolfer. Fer exariple, if yeur opperent has a Fottogless Pit ie play and it's your upkeep, you choose when te play the "seard ahility. However, if the

 for errata; the somtroller of the forte gets the Saproling tetelis.
 it's a coinpletaly soparate ativibute. Fer oxample, yen en't name "snow-soverd




## IRIATK

- Whan a Listid's ability mesofives, it lases all ahlitios, mek jest the lieid aht ity, While this ehange has lithla affect en the lieils themisulves, it chainates sean Yery unusual situalions that occurred whan a Sbapestufter stangod forms while in a Licid enehantment state.


## SPEGIFIC GARO QUILINES

 ous ahility, If you usa your oppeneat's Ireara Halls to pay the ecst of your spell by discarding a Maggara's Blassing the Blessug's seene abtity went trigger.


Why is it that the \#2 pencil is the most popular and yet it's still the \#2 pencil? If you try to fall and succeed, which have you done? Weighty questions like these are what we spend our time thinking about here at IQ Confidentiol. Except of course when we hear about groovy goings-on in the game biz, then we stop pondering and start writing:

- Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE) has begun development on the Middle-earth Battle System, a miniatures game set in I.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy world. The game will be fastplaying and utifize the one-roll resolution dice system from ICE's popular Silent Death sci-fi miniatures game. The basic set is scheduled to have a large selection of forces to choose from, including men, orc tribes, dwarves, elves and the armies of Gondor. The project is being headed by Tim Goodlett, designer of Explosive Decompression (a sci-fi miniatures game due out this summer). ICE is hoping the Middle-earth game will be on the shelves in the first quarter of '99.
- Eden Studios has sent out playtest versions of a noncollectible card game based on its Conspiracy X RPG. Titled Abduction, the game has simple mechanics along the lines of Archangel's Groo and Atlas Games' Lunch Money card games. Plans call for the 72 -card decks to debut at this year's GenCon.
- Talk on the Five Rings Publishing mailing list hinted that its planned "Rolling Thunder" release schedule will be modified. One proposal had the planned nine Hidden Emperor releases ( 50 cards each month for nine months) "collapsing" into three releases spread three months apart (each of these bigger releases would have 150 cards). Another proposal had the planned 15 -card boosters for $\$ 2.99 \mathrm{go}$ to eight card boosters for $\$ 1.99$.
- Dream Pod 9 is shrinking. Well, the scale of their minuatures, anyway. Starting this summer, DP9's line of Heory Gear mecha will be released in 144th scale as opposed to the current 87 th scale. The new four-part minis will continue to be sculpted by miniatures giant (ha, ha) RAFM.
- Pinnacle Entertainment has been hinting for some time that there will be big news this summer for fans of ther Deadlands RPG. The payoff will come this August with the release of Deadlands: Hell on Earth. Pinnacle is calling it a whole new setting unlike anything you've ever seen. It'll be written by acclaimed Deadionds author Shane Lacy Hensley.

That's all the writing we have for this month. Back to contemplating things like: Why do they call them hemorrhoids when the more appropriate term would be asteroids? Save us from further brain pain by sending us some tidbit to write up at: IQSecrets@aol.com


REVIEWING THELATEST RELEASES INGAMING

## Jabba's Palace

Tt's herel Jabba's Poloce has arrived, and players everywhere are rejoicing. Finally, we get the long-awaited Jabba the Hutt, as well as the always-popular "slave" Leia. Plus this set, which focuses on the first part of "Return of the ledi," includes more aliens than you can shake a gaffi stick at. There are plenty of recognizable characters, like Bio Fortuna and Salacious Crumb, but there are also dozens of enhanced images of people and places that were only barely on the screen, which means that many of the new cards will be unfamiliar to most players. In a very short amount of time, that will change.

Looking at the set, the first thing that jumps out at you is the beautiful imagery and artwork. It's easily the most colorful, detailed expansion Decipher has produced. There has been quite a shift in the lore text. Gone are the punny jokes and cutesy phrases. Some of the cards still have humor, but they have a much more "Star Wars" feel. A great example is the text for the fawa character R'kik, Hero of the Dune Sea: "A tribe of Tusken Raiders, a herd of angry banthas, a raging krayt dragon and R'kik. Minutes later, the Jawa emerged from the Dune Sea, a bantha tusk over his shoulder." Cooll

Okay, so "Star Wars" fans are sure to be jazzed by the set, but what about the players? One of the most significant things this expansion introduces-or reintroduces-is the revival of theme decks. There are cards in jabbo's Palace that allow players to make a Jawa or Tusken Raıder deck without fear of getting punished for playing with duplicates. Cards like Double Laser Cannon-a sevendestiny weapon that can make a Sandcrawler immune to attrition less than five-and the power-three R'kik are exciting additions to theme-minded players.

Many players will also be pleased to see cards that make several of the "worthless" premiere cards playable. Dust off those Piastoid Armors and Tusken Breath Masks. Thought those Utinnis were useless? Think again. Jabba's Polace is loaded with cards that the hox will have you digging up those old cards.

Besides the obvious power cards like labba,

## JABBA'S PALACE



GAHE: STAR WARS GEG<br>PUBLLSHER: DECIPHER<br>GERRE: SPAGE OPERA<br>SII SIZE: 180 GARDS<br>RELEASE: MAY 1998<br>PaCKdGHff: 9-GARD BOOSTER PACKS<br>SUGUEETE RETALL: $\$ 2.50$ PER BOOSTER


the new Artoo, etc., tournament players will enjoy a few new rules, First off, characters with more than one uniqueness dot are now non-unique. Sorry Minyoond Also, the Dark and Light Sides both get a new type of cardthe starting interrupt. After you choose your starting location, you can play one starting interrupt from your deck.

Currently, there are only two starting interrupts-The Signal and Twi'lek Advisor. Both let you start the game with an effect that doesn't have a deploy cost. That means you can play defensive cards like Do or Do Not and There is No Try and not have to worry about when they come up in the game. You can also be more devious, and start with Nightfall-or Sunsdown-and try for a spy attack deck. This landmark addition to the game will have tournament players everywhere reconsidering their strategies.

Decipher has done something else for the first time. Instead of fixing abusive cards with magic bullets, they've designed cards that target overall deck themes instead. For example, the Dark Side effect Cane Adiss lets you deploy cards-ignoring ail restrictionsat a non-shielded planet location where your opponent just initiated a Force drain. Is your opponent abusing the Dagobah cloud drain? Watch out! Here comes the Rancor!

Jabba's Palace certainly has a lot to absorb, and it might be quite some time before some of the more obscure combos rear their heads. But for now, one thing is clear: This is the cleanest, sharpest, most exciting expansion to date. Iason Hobinette

## THEGUOD

- Theme decks are here! You want to play the Jawa-Jedi deck? There are enough cards to do it now.
- 88, count 'em, 88 new aliens.
- Mmm... Slave Leia...

- Where's Jedi Luke?
- With so many unknown aliens, there are a lot of rares that people won't be thrilled to receive. "Another Woof?!"

- Hutt Smaech. Ugh.


## 

## Underworld

The world of organized crime is the focus for the first expansion set for the Shadowrun: TCG. The set of 140 cards features new runners from the big syndicates-the Mafia and the Yakuza-and Lone Star, the top cops. For the most part, the new cards focus on these new themes, expanding the game by giving you new deck-building options.

Most of the locations, challenges and special cards in the set deal with the criminal underworld, with locations like the Mafia-controlled Docks, the Black Market and Lone Star Lock-Up and challenges like Yakuza Assassin and Lone Star Beat Cops. There are no new cyberdecks or programs for deckers in the set, and no new cyberware, but there are new spells, weapons and gear galore, including my favorite new weapon, the Baseball Bat.

There are more than 50 new special cards, including more drones for riggers, totem cards for shamansspecials which give shamans certain bonuses-and Gang HQ cards that make all gangers you control members of the same gang with specrfic bonuses and drawbacks. My favorites are two new speciais that let you make other funners commit sucide: Seppuku and Suicidal Tendencies. Hey, no one said the Underworld is a pretty place.

In addition to all the cool new toys, the best thing about Underworld is that it allows for more customized deck-building and theme decks for the game. The new card selection lets you build a Mafia, Yakuza, Lone Star or Ganger deck fairly easily. Theme decks tend to be very effective in certain areas-a Lone Star deck has all sorts of ways to frag over Mafia and Yakuza runners and vice versa-but they are also vulnerable to certain challenges and specials that specifically target them. 5 A lot of the special cards in Underworld are only effective for certain types of runners, so they work best with a tightly

## UNDERWORLD



GAME: SHADOWRUN: THE TRADING GARD GAME
PUBELISHEA: FASA
DESIGHERS: MIKE NIELSEN AND JIM NELSON
GERRE: CYBERPUNK FANTASY
Release: MARCH 1998
SET SIIE: 140 CARDS
PAGKAGMR: 15-CARD BOOSTER PACKS SUGGESTED RTALI: $\$ 2.99$ PER BOOSTER PACK
"Seppuku and Suicidal Tendencies-No one said the underworld is a pretty place."

JUE
RELEASES

## AD8j): Jakandor: Isle of Destiny

The first dakandor supplement recolved a parfect scope from us. Ho reason not to think it won't be the same this time around with the second in the series. Iffe of Dostiny has you playing the role of a mage or apprentice defending the fand from incoming barbarlan hordas. TSR. 112 pagas. \$21.85.

## Al)\&: Player's Guide to Greyhawk

Greyhawh returns and this is your guidebook! The Playsr's Guide features now legends and deadly dungeons for your PCs to explore, as well as special classes, national trachgrounds and naw kuts unique to the world of Creyhawk. TSR. 48 pases. $\$ 13.95$.

## AD80: The Fall of Myth Dranner

Tho ruins of Hyth Drannor ane famous in the lanti of Faerun, but the detalis of the collapse that marked the end of the Arcane age have bean lost to time-until now Your heroes will not only dlscover Myth Drannor's secrets, but play a part in the pivotal syents that shapod Forgotten Ralms history. TSR. 64 pages. \$13.95,

## Bue Planet: Archipelago

The first supplement for the Bive Planet sel-fi RPG datails Posendon's largast and most heavily settlad island cluster, the Pacifica Archipelago. This detailed tome includes descriptions of key groups, notable NPGs, new flopa and fauna and several precise maps. Numerous adventure seeds will be sur'e to help you kick-start a campalgn, Blohazard Games. 128 pages. $\$ 18.95$.

## Call of Cthulhu:No Man's Land

The sotting is WWI, the Arden Forest. You am members of the famous Lost Battalion, confrented not only by the Germans, but also by the arcane forces of the Gthulhu Mythos. Can the power of your Browning autamatic rifies defeat the mysterious Lliogor? Thaosum, 84 pages. $\$ 14.85$.

## Changeling Kingdom of Willows

Explore the changeling kingdom of Southwest Concordia. This book uncovers the secret conspiracies of the noble courts and the commeners, and even unravels a few mysterles. The firtst In a serles of setting books that will span Coneordia and beyond. White Wolf tames. 174 pages. 818 .

## Conspiracy X: The Unseen Hand: The Blaek

Bools Sourcebiok
Hen have labsied you "sples," "traitors" and worse Long associated with covert ops, classified material and undisclosed funding, your organization has come to be known by the name of the very projects you're assigned; you are 8 lack Book, This sourcebook gives players all the inside imfo on Aegis' major riyal. Eden Studios. 180 pages. $\$ 20$.

JUNE RELEASES
Tribe 8Rulebook
fribe 8 is a troleplaying game set in a trulbal futurb. where neroes are filessed with mystical Insight and masked by destiny, They must struggle to build a new suciety from the ashes of the old, fightmg against allen horrois and the Fatimas, avatar's of the Boddesss, Gontains word backgrournd, character creation and interaction rules, and a saw system for runiling magic, called "Syntiesis." Bream Pod 8. 248 pages. $\$ 28.85$.

Farthdawn: Cara Fahd: The Ork Nation Fromit across Barsalve, throusands of orlk have come to rebuild thele anclent homeland Gara fahd, Jhls sourcabook descrithes the leader's, peopie, hlistory and secrets of this reborm reatm and provides detalls on the ont tribes that form its milltary might. FASA. 136 pages. $\$ 18$.

Galaxy:The Arena
A soqual to the popular Fitan: the Arena noncollectible card game, Balaxy: the Arena sulustitutus strength carnos with flegts of spaceeraft. Each fleet has uniqus strengths and eapabilttias, adding nem dopth of gamepiay to the 7Itan system. Avalor 8ill. \$27.

Magice The Gathering: Exodus A buyback counterspell? The largest spike yat? An artlfact licidf Yep, Magics latest set is packed with 140 now cards which will throw a bunch more curves into the game. Wlzards of the Gonst 15-card booster packs; $\$ 2.89$ per booster.

Marvel Super Heroes
Wolverine vs. Sabreteath. The Fantastic Four vs. Falactus. Doctor Doom ve, the Impassible Man. Marval Super Heraes is back with a hrand-new system incorporating the Sach game rules. If you love comios and roleplaying, this is a no-bralner that even the Mindless Ones would love. Boxed sat. TSR. \$24.98.

Men in Black: Inslant Adventures
Yoe've got the sult. You've got the glasses. Now, t's tima to got the bad guys. This supplement includes nine missions which can the mun with any campaign at a moment's netice, West End fames. 98 pages with 4 color caril shoats. $\$ 18$.

Noble Armada
Gommand fricates, destroyems or dreadnoughts as you seek to carvg a flofdom from the stars! A standalone starslitp miniatures game, Woble Armada fits into the setting of the Fading Suns roleplaying universe for thase dlehuckers who want to involve their characters in starship combats, Holistic Desigins. \$55.

Rifts World Book 17: Warlords of Russia This sourcobook for fifts inciudes detalls on various poltical and milltary groups revolving around the Warlords and their Aussian cyborgs-as well as ideas for onemies and adventures. Hasmmer and siekie stot Included. Palladium Books. 204 pages. \$20. 95.

Trinity: Tectinolody Manual Tachnology inftuencess every aspect of 22 ndcentury life. The Tochnology Manial prosents an incredlble array of tevices, from palm-sized minicomps to deep-space freighters, repeating lasers to vacoders. Not to mention the rffty hotach toys. White Wiff Games. 136 pages. $\$ 16$.

Alternity Gamemaster Guide

To real surprises. That was my first I impression upon reading through this, the companion book to the Alternity Player's Handbook. Then I started digging in, and I found more than a few nuggets of gold that ensured that this book gets listed as a "must-have" for anyone who is serious about running an Alternity campaign.

The majority of the tome is dedicated to giving perspective on each of the sections found in the Player's Handbook to the GM. Virtually every chapter in that book is covered again here, much in the same way that the $A D \& D$ Dungeon Moster's Guide does for the AD\&D Player's Hondbook. That's the part you expect.

Fortunately, the authors improve on the original model by providing excellent examples and sidebar information that will help even expert GMs get a stronger handle on how to run this game. I am especially impressed with the "It's Your Game" sidebars that crop up frequently, exhorting the prospective gamemaster to take the bull by the horns
"This is much more than an edited version of the AD\&D Dungeon Master's Cuide." and run ther game the way they want.


I was really excited about the additional sections that give nearly complete instructions on how to build and use spaceships, create planetary systerns and their populations, and even how to construct entire universes and set up a star-spanning campaign. There is stuff here that I would recommend to people regardless of what game system they were running. Would you beleve there is even a more-than-cursory attempt at providing conversion rules for bringing AD\&D characters into Afternity? Spelfiommer meets "Babylon 5" anyone?

There are a couple of points : have problems with. The most popular part of the book will undoubtedly be chapter 16 , where it introduces the FX system, which ailows for magic, - faith, super powers, etc.; the authors really should have expanded on that a bit more and provided more examples. Hopefully, there
$\square$ ALTERNITY GAMEMASTER GUIDE
GANE: ALTERMITY
PUBLSHHER: TSR
MIHIN: RIOHARI BAKER ANI EILC SLAVICSEK
QEYELOPER: DAVID ECKELBERRY
GGHPE: SCIENGE FICTION/SPACE OPERA
FORHTT: 250-PAGE HARDCOVER
ReEEASE: MAY 1998
SUGEESEE RETAL: $\$ 29.95$
will be a follow-up book to support this later. I would have also liked to have seen a more detailed and rulesoriented approach to creating alien races for the game; the method they provide is too open-ended and lays too much upon a new GM.

Ultimately, however, this book makes the whole Alternity game more accessible than the Player's Handbook could manage alone. The combination gives a solid game an even more solid foundation. Wean Patriek Fannon

# Mage: The Sorcerers Crusade 

TheThe trouble with innovation is that you can only do it once; I after that, it's repetition. This is what makes reviewing White Wolf's historical games so difficult. Each one is a remake of a previous game, moved backwards in time from today's World of Darkness to a point in its past where the rules are slightly different. They stand somewhere between "brand new game" and "third edition"; there's a new setting and more polished mechanics, butwhether you're in medieval times or modern-Vampire is Vampire.

The latest in the series is Mage: The Sorcerers Crusade, a reworking of Mage: The Ascension set in Europe during the Renaissance. Unlike the modern game, where the mages are desperately fighting to keep magick alive as science closes in, the war for reality is still up for grabs here. Either the mystic Traditions or the Order of Reason could win the day and, for the first time, players get the chance to take etther side
"Dead" traditions, like the Ahl---Batin and
> "A perfect change from the usual fireballfantasy fare."

and the will to do it. The game still runs on the classic White Wolf engine, familiar to World of Darkness players. However, there's no text cut-and-pasted from Mage either; it's all been completely rewritten and updated. There may never be a third edition of Ascension, but this will do in a pinch.

Mage: The Sorcerers Crusade is the newest of the historical games and the most different from its source. It's also the best. For those who've never played Mage before, it's a perfect change from the usual fireball-fantasy fare. For those who have, it's the game you love in a new setting packed with possibility, Jason Schneiderman
the Solificati, are presented in all their glory along with the groups that will one day grow into the great and powefful Technocracy, such as the Cabal of Pure Thought and the High Artisans. The rules for magick are turned upside-down; summoning an elemental or praying for a miracle would be considered "casual magic" while using a pistol borders on "vulgar." And Paradox, the bane of modem magi, is replaced by the Scourge, which can be either helpful or harmful depending on intent.

The other side to these changes is a renewed emphasis on how magick is performed. There are several magickal styles detailed in the game; you're expected to choose one as the means by which your character changes reality. This makes sense: A priest from the Celestial Choir wouldn't use the tools of the pagan Verbena. Components and rituals become key game elements in a way that they never were in Mage, a difference that adds a lot of flavor.

Beneath the changes, though, you've still got the best of the five Storyteller games. If you've never played, you've missed out on one of the best magic systems ever in a roleplaying早 1 game, one that allows you to do anything you can dream up if you've got the skill

[^1]
## TITR 6000

- If it wasn't broken, they didn't fix it.
- Sorcerers Grusade emphasizes style over power: Just because you can do anything doesn't mean that you will. it also codifies magickal ways and means in a manner that M:TA doesn't.
- After the sale of Ars Magiea, Mage was a game without a past. Sorcerers Grusade fixes that, giving such malnstays as the Order of Hermes and the Tremere vampires a new foundation.
- It's a beautiful book, from the gold-embossed cover to the full-cotor apt by the Hildebrant Brothers to the opening story by Sterm Gonstantine.


## TITERAD

- Do tertiary abilities get five or seven pointsp Why do the astronomy-oriented Celestial Masters and the secret police organization called the Misrafai have the same magickal affinities? Like scratches on a golden vessel, the fow inconsistencies in a product this good stand out.


## TIIE UGLY

- The examples suggest that the sphere of Spirit in M:SC replaces Entropy as the fallback sphere for coincidental magick, with " ask God to do it" as the substitute for "There's a random chance that it happens." Storytellers beware.
- There's a huge, screaming typo on the character sheet.
 Try facing a mind flayer lich."


## The Illithiad

The dreaded mind flayer has long been an AD\&D favorite. Unfortunately, they have gotten little more press than an entry in the Monstrous Manual. With the release of The mithrad-the latest volume in the "Monstrous Arcana" series-these brain-suckers finally get their due.

Presented as the findings of a merchant sage named Wakeman, The illithiad sets out to present their disgusting, horrific culture in all of its slimy detail.

Much of the book is devoted to providing the DM with background and insights on illithid culture. There are essays县跲 on mind flayer anatomy and life cycles, philosophies, theology and a

## THE ILLITHAD

BAME: ADAD<br>PUBLISHEE: TSR<br>AUTHDRS: BRUCE R. GORDELL<br>GE.NFE: FANTASY<br>RELEASE: APRIL 1998<br>FORHI: D8-PABE 8OFTCOVER<br>SUEGESTED RETAUL: $\$ 19.95$<br>COHTAGT: WWW.TSR.COM

$\frac{20}{2}$
species origin that could make the basis for a cool illithicentric campaign. Since psionics are so integral to running mind flayers, there is also a chapter devoted to the disciplines mastered by the illithid, plus new powers unknown to mortal

man. Introducing psionics into a campaign can be tricky, and the author provides helpful tips on integrating them smoothly.

The Illithiad provides the DM with practical tools as well as background material. There's an entire mind flayer colony for PCs to visit (one way or another), giving them the perfect chance to discover the illithid secrets revealed in this book. There are new illithid mutants to take on-you haven't seen it alj until you've faced an illithid lichand new toys to plunder, such as psychic swords and brainmates. One gripe: The book could have been organized a bit better; in several spots, intriguing concepts are introduced and promptly dropped, only to be taken up again in later chapters. A bigger drawback is the price point. Though the color illustrations are handsome and lend the book tremendous atmosphere and character, 20 bucks is a lot to pay for eye candy.

Overall, The Illithiad is a solid and entertaining work. DMs planning high-level forays into the Underdark will likely find it an indispensable investment. Thanks to the high price, however it isn't a book for the merely curious. Paul Sudlow

## Dungeon Builder's Guidebook

Demember the fantastic dungeons of Gary Gygax? ThThe Temple of Elementol Evil or the Decent into the Depths of the Earth-related adventures? Now it's your turn to create the newest dungeons of dread. The Dungeon Builder's Guidebook teaches you how to design and populate your own dungeons, ranging from the traditional cave-in-the-wilderness to interdimensional adventures.

The Guidebook starts by covering the basic issues of a dungeon. Important, realistic details such as "Where does the monster get its food?" and "How do the monsters keep from killing each other?" are
 discussed in same detail. The age old debate between realism and fun is


## DUNGEON

BUilDER'S CUIDEBOOK


GAKE: AD\&D
PUBLISHER: TSR
AUTHOR: BRUCE R. GORDELL
GEHRE: FANTASY
RELEASE: MAY 1998
FOMHRT: 64-PAGE SOFTCOVER WITH 16 PAGES OF MAPS
SUBEESTED RETAL: $\$ 14.95$ "If you're an AD\&D
fan, you probably
could have written
this book yourself."
to challenge the characters with distorted dilstances or infinite starcases.

There is also a chapter that covers the basics of trap design followed by a random design generator for when the DM isn't feeling very creative. And finally, examples of the different types of dungeons are included to help get you started.
The book is well-organized and easy to use, but it lacks originality and substance. One-third of the book is space-filler disguised as mini-dungeon examples, seemingly because the author couldn't come up with more than 40 pages of advice on dungeon building. in fact, the random dungeon generator is recycled from the first edition of the Dungeon Master Cuide. Basicaily, this book is a compilation of previous texts and ideas in one volume.

If you are a new or out of practice DM who's looking for a reference book that reviews important dungeon concepts, the Dungeon Builder's Guidebook will meet your needs. If you're an $A D \& D$ fan and have already taken a stab at designing your own dungeons, you probably could have written this book yourselfand you most likely won't find enough new ideas to justify buying what is primarily a book of recycled materals. 1 Todd Pasey
brought to the table, as well as things to avoid, like "Monty Hall" campaigns.

The next part describes different dungeon types. These include the tradrtional castle-, ruin- and cave-dungeons as well as the more obscure aenal and underwater and encounters. The interdimensional dungeon allows access to a variety of planes and offers new ways

## 

## World of Darkness: Hong Kong <br> Tet me state up front why I didn't give thes book a "six " <br> ural, with a lot of attention pard to the way

 Ho index. That's about it, really. I can't give a perfect score to any game book that doesn't have an index.Beyond that, however, I am extremely thrilled with this piece of work. The cover is eye-catching and instantly sets the tone of the book. The rest of the layout and artwork is smooth, elegant, and, in some cases, downright gorgeous.

The writıng will not disappoint either; Jackie Cassada and Nicky Rea have obviously put a fair amount of
the hox effort into their research, but they refuse to bore us with too much

WORLD OF DARKNESS: HONG KONG from perfection."

## GURPS Russia

For what it is, GURPS Russia is a great book. What It is: a niche product A niche that is incredibly small, but a niche nonetheless. This supplement really couldn't be done much better. Any detail you could desire about Russia from the 10th century to the beginning of the 18 th century is all right at your fingertips, but this begs the question "How much can a GM really use from this book?"

One thing's for sure: This is no James Bond movie. There are no spies or Cold War conflicts. What a reader gets is a history lesson in the daily lives of early Russians. This can be good or bad depending on your desires. If you want to place an Th O O O adventure during the rise of a certain Slavic

## GURPS RUSSIA

GAME: GURPS
PUBBLISHER: STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GERPE: HISTORICAL
" $80 \operatorname{sen}$ buxan Ganss


STEVE JACKBON GAMES
detail.
Instead, they give us just as much as we need to taste Hong Kong without drowning in the minutiae. We are shown where things happen and what kind of place Hong Kong is for a supernat-
the mystical and mundane worlds are more the mystical and mundane worlds are more
intertwined than they are in Western realms. Best of all, we are given this in a style that is easy on the brain and stylish to boot.

Most of the book is dedicated to "Who's Who" in Hong Kong's supernatural comWho" in Hong Kong's supernatural com-
munity, detailing more than just Kindred. This book makes a real go of integrating the various types of beings that are in the World of Darkness; just as Hong Kong blends so many different mortal cultures, so does it intermingle the mystical cultures of the WOD as well. In fact, the only other "complaint" I could offer is that this book is difficult to make the most of unless you have Kindred of the East, where much of the core rules information for many of these characters abviously originates.

If anyone was afraid that White Wolf's announcement that no more core "critters" would be created as core systems meant the end of good stuff for the World of Darkness, this is one entry into the body of evidence proving that notion wrong. In fact, I have to give this book to my Storyteller; I want to play in White Wolf's Hong King. I can think of no better recommendation. E Sean Patrick Fannon
 -
 Atlantic Storm
©ubmarines are cool. Big metal fish prowling the Bocean depths hunting for things to blow up have long captured the imaginations of history and warfare buffs. This is the focus of Avalon Hill's newest non-collectibie card game, Atlontic Storm. Unfortunately, this World War II game is a card game first and a historical wargame a far distant second.

Designed for three to six players, you alternate playing Force cards from your hand in an attempt to either sink


PUBLISHER: AVALON HIL
DESGIGER: BEN KNIGHT
6EMPE: HISTORICAL NOK-COLLECTIBLE card game Relege: MARCH 1998
GOMPOKENIS: 152 GARDS, 3 SIX-SIDED DICE, STORAGE TRAY SUGGESTED RETALL: \$27


## "A card game first.u* a wargame a far distent second."

rating will be used for every round. Each player then plays Force cards from either the Allsed side (escort) or the Germans (sink). After each player has played a card, the side with the most points (Allied or German) succeeds and the player who played the highest card on the succeeding side scores the convoy's victory points and points for each enemy card played in opposition.

To spice up things, certain ships are keyed to certain convoys. If you manage to recreate a historical battle by playing a convoy's adversary, your Force card counts double. Sorne force cards have random values; once everyone has played their card, you roll a six-sided die to determine the card's strength.

Table talk is encouraged and you can make nonlike airplanes, battleships and submarines and each has three ratings denoting how strong it is in air, surface and underwater combat. The player playing first gets to choose which
binding pacts with players to support your side for future favars or to hinder the player who is currently winning. Unfortunately, there are some rounds where, due to card restrictions, you can't do anything, forcing you to discard. Not fun.

Stripping away the paper-thin historical veneer, Atlartic Storm is basically a trumping card game with lots of chrome rules to make it look like a wargame. That's fine if you're looking for a fun, easy card game, and there's enough strategy to give it plenty of replay value. But if you're seeking something hugely innovative or want to gain insight into the tactics of convoy warfare, you'll be disappointed. © M. Goode


## ThGBOOKOE



## Gerrand's journal

 ofters aghimpst at Alamic's latest statKow much would you pay for the actual captain's log of the Weatherlight? Twenty bucks? A hunared? Yout full set of Moxes? Well, how zbout getting tor free? Through the diligent work of our vast archaeology department, finQuest has unearthed Gerrard's official Weatherlight ship's log. The following pages tell the stery ef Gerard and his erew as they rescue Captain Sisayk fetrieve the stolen Legacy artifacts-and hightail it outta the plane of Rath in the nick of time. Mixed throughout the journal are hints concerning nearly two dozen Exodus cards, so scan the pages carefully and wrack your noggin to see What's in store this summer for the latest Magic expansion

By fir InOurat stafit

б
The Weatherlight may have escaped the plane of TRath. fut 9 havenil... Inever wif. Ralh cant merely be forgoten tike a childhood romance: my: memorits of it have a servible life of their own. one which wifl haunt me unto deatf. I look at an innocent gank of stone and see tive flowstone claws waiting in ambush, I gaee at a fake and think of Reorwater assassiuns. Just fast night. 4 listened to Starke's dauqfiter. Suhara, recoum her triais in the Siroughold dungeons... and alf I coufd fical was Oolrath's voice echoing in my mind.

Rath does nol fel go. You cannot escape it.

- (irm is still there, and the aceursed traitor Crovax. And that's where the neas part of this tale beguls, ismit it?
We find recoveled तhe Leyacy arsifacts. Thowever. (Mirri, our noble cal whertion" my dear friend. had been injured in batile. Crovax had suffered ant influ of mystical mergy at the deathside of hie omte - protectur Selenia.
 were afmost tess than humann ...inte did we hnew then. That fuch of hnowtidye wouts , ind un atl tew acurly in the hours that followed.
 secn, and it appeared that foth, Mirri and Crovax were saved...as leasi Fry the time feing. As Orim mude her way back up to the deck, 'Katrn,

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Fatc berrayed t1 witnessed. Unste sprawted form. [?redator had f Chaware that! moorings and st

Mirri was 100 . couldan't reach fy For one mricf! our eves met... cantiot put into. emotions 4 . Then, sf "away,

and C 1 (1) m rathe பルに d 8.7. m



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 ") same force 25 an orggs it it is the only croaluro and strenond of 13. The jackalope Hordis a green beasest the sizo me these eromated Lin .ack-it Mees?

1i. the battlo nold tho monom spoll and spelleas for castst another spoll and nats for is caster to call it
over


## THE FINAL FRONTIER

Is the Gremt Borrier the final fremtier? Nah. That was cut out of Star Trek cannon for the same reasons you'll never see Wolverine on an episode of "Voyager." Er, at least we hope not. Transported to a galaxy faf, far away, Picard and company find a new frontier to explore-and a new enemy in the Empire. In the Stor Wars CCG, the Federation has some very potent characters and starships, as well as quite a few new rules explaining how to integrate the Federation into your Light side deck:

Federation: Federation characters are a new character type, and do not count as Rebels or Aliens. Federation characters may not participate in a battle you innitiate unless you have a Leader or a character with ability > 3 also involved in the battle.
Soong-Type Andreidst These very rare droids have several special abilities. They are immune to Restraining Bolt and purchase. They may, however, be stolen using other methods.

Whenever an interrupt, effect or device targets a Soong-Type Android, use its armor instead of its ability. Soong-Type Androids may never count as the "highest ability character."

Iransperters: A group of characters moving to or from a starship equipped with a transporter may "beam up"-or "down"-for X Force. $X=$ number of opponent's starships at same system. Beaming is an unlimited move. Whenever characters beam to or from a starship, that starship's armor is reduced to 0 until the end of the turn.

As a whole, Federation characters have some nice abilities. For one, most are as powerful as their Rebel counterparts, if not more so. Plus, cards like Scanning Crew and M'ilyoom Onith have no effect on Federation characters, since they aren't Rebels or aliens. However, the Federation's finest really shine when it comes to their individual abilities.


## JEAN-LUC PICARD

The captain of the U.S.S. Enterprise-D and -E and a victim of the Borg is an experienced traveler through space, time and even other dimensions. Picard's strongest quality is his ability to lead. He always seems to get the best results from his crewand keep them alive through every adventure. It only makes sense that he would protect your forces in a space battle, demonstrating his incredible head for strategy.

Though each crew member enhances the Enterprise, Picard truly makes it a juggernaut, second only to the Executor. When piloted by Jean-Luc alone, the Enterprise has a power of 8, four points of ability, and is immune to attrition < 4. His game text makes this the least amount of attrition you'll have to suffer, and give Vader and Tarkin one more destiny they'll want to cancel every battle. With Picard on the Enterprise and Captain Han in the Falcon, there are few places for the Empire to hide.

## HEURENANT COMMANDER DATA

Look out ic-88, here comes the biggest droid to ever grace a Star Wors card. Not only is Data more powerful than the aforementioned assassin and bounty hunter, he's the ultimate protection from character weapons, and cards like Gravel Storm and Trample. Except for lightsabers, Data protects your characters almost completely from weapons like Boba Fett's Blaster Rifle and greatly increases their odds against the dreaded Light Repeating Blaster Rifle.

Unfortunately for Data, his protection doesn't extend to himself. Being a droid presents its own set of problems for him too. Even though Data is immune to Restraining Bolt and purchase, he's not immune to Look Sir, Droids, Trample or Gravel Storm. To keep these from being a problem, you could always play I Have A Bad Feeling About This, moving it to a more difficult target, made even more so by Data's presence.



After a few seasons of getting his ass whupped by practically everyone who set foot on the Enterprise, Worf wised up and learned how to put up a fight. Now he's the one kicking ass and taking names, And his card is no different. Thanks to Worf's security background, he's got incredible game text. Like Picard, he has a defensive ability and adds something special to the Enterprise.

Unlike Picard—and more like Data-Worf's game text affects battles at his site. As a matter of fact, Data and Worf make a really hard-to-break combo. While Data protects your characters from weapons fire, Worf makes sure you never suffer attrition-that is as long as you have enough Security Personnel (Red Shirt') present.

4 man


## U.S.S. ENTERPRISE-D

Flagship of the United Federation of Planets, the Enterprise is the best in its class. Like all Galaxy-class starships, it has immunity to attrition when piloted by Federation pilots, although it does have an extra point of protection. Likewise, its power is 5 instead of the usual 4 . These differences are small compared to those that the right crew make. When fully manned by Picard, Riker, Data, Worf and Geordi it is power 13, armor 8 and hyperspeed 7. All this and it's immune to attrition $<7$ ! And if someone you don't want to fight ever attacks you, you can use 6 Force to cancel the battle.


## EXPANDING THE ENIPIRE

If Emperer Palpertine discovered a gateway to another galaxy, one rife with interstellar conflict, do you think he would just sit back and watch? Heck no. As soon as the Empire found new territory available for the taking, they'd pack several of their best officers into a Star Destroyer and send them out to do battle. Other than a slight miscue at Yavin, Grand Moff Tarkin and Darth Vacier were a solid team, and the Dark side can always use the aid of a swine like Boba Fett.

In the Stor Trek CCG, each of these characters-as well as their ship-would surpass the power of most of the existing Star Trek cards. Like the Federation crew joining the Light side, there are several rules governing the use of imperials in the Alpha quadrant:

Imperiaf: Imperial forces must attack any Rebel ships or personnel present at the same location. Battling Rebels does not cause Imperials to be 'stopped,' but they may not battle again that turn.
Bounty Hunfers At the end of any battle at this personnel's location, you may capture one opponent's personnel discarded during the battle.
Alfers Counts as Guramba. May probe to cancel an event. Event canceled.

Sense: Counts as Empathy. May probe to cancel an interrupt. $1 \square$ : Interrupt canceled.

Confrel: Counts as Mindmeld. May probe to cancel a just played doorway. F: Doorway canceled. You may probe until successful. For each probe, that opponent scores $X$ bonus points. $X=$ number of probes in the attempt. For example, if you attempt to cancel an event, after your first probe, your opponent scores one bonus point. After the second, they score two additional points. If you probe six times, that's 21 points!

With these basic rules in place, the Empire can put forth some outrageous characters and ships, the likes of which even the battle-hardened Klingons may learn to fear.

## DARTH VADER

What can we say? Vader is THE man. He's got one of the most powerful Stor Wars cards, and his Star Trek card is no different. His skills are very impressive, and the download of his lightsaber means that some away team is going to get hurt. Badly. It lets him mortally wound an opponent in away team combat if his strength is higher than theirs, which means many personnel will fall before his blade.

The most popular deck will most undoubtedly use Intermix Ratio with Vader to semi-safely counter your opponent's cards... Just don't let them get rid of the Ratio or you'll lose! Another strong use of Vader is in an all-planet missions deck, along with Roga Danar, Zon and Bossk, to form a major groundpounding beat down. Though you may take a hit from Balancing Act, who cares? Nobody's going to mess with you planetside, and you can even start a Colony. Combine Darth Vader with Dark Anger and... Need we say more?


## CRAND MOFF TARKIN

Let's face it. This guy is just plain creepy. Still, if his Stor Wars card wasn't so good, people probably wouldn't give him much thought. His Star Trek stats are generally average, but his special dilemma-canceling ability can be very useful. He's a good guy to have around when you come across a nasty dilemma such as Strict Dress Code.

Also, Imperial spies allow you to use any espionage cards as your own. Many of the Romulan space missions are worth a lot of points, and speaking of points: With stats like Tarkin's, tt's a wonder he doesn't have green blood and pointed ears.

## DEVASTATOR

By far the largest ship introduced into the Star Trek CCG, this thing sure lives up to its name. This ship differs from the regular Star Destroyer in that it requires one less staffing icon, has one more power, and it possesses the TIE Support download icon. For those of you who haven't seen it, TIE Support is an interrupt that adds 5 to the power of any Star Destroyer on which it's played. Don't forget to load up those astromechs, because there's nothing better than their cumulative range bonuses-except perhaps adding on a Captain's Log as well.

It's also worth noting that the mighty Star Destroyer is only the second ship that can come out of a Borg Ship attack undamaged without the aid of other cards.



## BOBA FETT

Boba Fett is the biggest, baddest bounty hunter in any universe... Just don't mention the Sarlaac. Boba's exobiology means that he can help you get past the dreaded Coalescent Organism. His other skills are Impressive, but his bounty hunting takes the cake-as well as your opponent's personnel.
Boba Fett's weapons are many, and their power is great. His rifle and wrist rockets add to power, while his turbo projected grappling hook allows him to capture two personnel each turn. Interrogating prisoners is so... old school. Instead of getting points for their release, you can play bounties on personnel and receive points for their capture!

Children are screaming. The streets are aflame. Fellow warriors lle dead ot your feet. With a desperate lunge, you wedge your shoulder against the city gate and strain to keep the foul monster out.

One final, massive blow splinters the wood and sends you skittering across cobblestone. You look up to see the burning red eyes and metallic grin of a demon.

The terminator has entered the city.

Wouldn't that be cool? Everyone knows how to turn classic movie monsters into protagonists for their games. Vampires, werewolves, mummies, ghosts, yawn, yawn, yawn. But what about the new breed of deadiy, sciencefiction villains? Let's look at how some modern movie monsters translate into the science-fiction, fantasy and horror worlds of your favorite RPG.
just remember: In roleplaying games, everyone can hear you scream.

## By Kenneth Hite



TERMINATOR STATS
STAR WARS
TYPE: Badoss Droid
DEXTERTY: 2D, Blasier or Firearm 70 +1
PERCEPTSON: 3D
STREMGTH: 5D
IECHICAL: 20
MONE: 15
SIIE: 1.8 melars toll
SCALE: Crealurg

VAMPIRE
PHYSICAL: St 9, Dex 4, Stm 8
MENTAL: Por 4, Int 3 , Wist 3
WILLPOWER: 8
HEATH LEYES: OK(x5), •(x5), -2(x3), - $5(x 4)$

ATTACKS Punch/10 dice, Kick/ 10 dite;
 Firreurms 7, Melee 4, Trocking 6 MOVE: Walk/Rum 9/35
HEIGHT: $6^{\prime \prime} 3^{\prime \prime}$

Special Abilttiess Rongesinding. Telescopic vision. Infrored vision. Perfice voice mimicry.
Special Defensess: internol alloy sketeton cannot be domaged by bullers, nemmol steel weapons of fire; only intanse pressures, magic, expiosives, ormor-pierting rounds or molten metol or lavo con destroy it. It may be susceppible to olher chemicals of gumemaster (GM) discretion.


T-1000
 into anything of the same mass: nny humanoid, a streth of floor, a cos door, at. Its body iself is a weapon, molding to fit its owner's desires. The $T$ - 1000 completelhy regenarutes demage done to it in one cound up 3020 parcent of its original life. Even if complifely blown into shards, it will eveartually flow bock together. Only bxtroordinarily het molten metal-or perhops similarty powerful magix - en permanently desstroy

$\square$

FANTASY: You say "cyborg," sty "golem." But not the nice kinid, devoted to protecting the help-:

 Esmspin probably grented by a med cr cuil sugo in wo atompt odentre, agremereesemes indestructibic iff its heart can tor magienily
 of how many fir points the fion tasy terminator takes, it will always: rebuild itseff and retum until the: acharesters find and destroy its care: fill cenceiled hasints

HONRORs Sometimes the Technocracy just has to take off tratid govere temmaterstytecyporgis the peficet why to meid pardex while senctign
 mives A terminater cht to kill swampire wink

 firig sinvo sugs maker ar axedlont sidenans for the terminator loaded for were-beasts.

14hese horrific insectile monstrosities have,
 assured in the "Alien" series, the




 digestive thece the nowetheget fore then diad






 piontopownall acmen aquadran ef peres what

 around in the comers for a change:

FANHASY8 The xenomorph is, abviously the product of some,

 Rnang 2 Whictutatroninisent to dively
 hatedu centu su syphons? Wighiy yphotinsend wismots ainightatumbin ex ree eggse Wrexuomorph pimetodty the


 their kingdereis oniy atherses.
 certainly incubate inside were-

## XENOMORPH STATS

## STAR WARS

TYPE: Hive olien soldiaf DEXTERITY: 5D PERCEPION: 3D, Hide 3D +2 STRENGTH: 4D +2 BIE: STR+10 MOVE: $10 / 12$ SIZE: 2 meters

## VAMPIRE

PHYSICAL: Str 4, Dex 5, STm 5
MENTAL: Per 4, In 2 , Wis 3
WILLPOWER 9
HEALTH LEVELS: OK( $\times 2$ ), $-1(x 3),-3,-5$
ATACKS: Bite/6 dite (aggr), Clow/3 dice; Abilities: Alertness 4, Braw 4, Clumbing 4, Intrastadion 5, Stealth 4, Track 3 MOVE- Wolk/Swim 7/4
HEIGHT: $6^{\prime} 5^{\prime \prime}$

Special Atsacks: Aliens never retreat or surrender, and fight using coordinoted lactics.
Speciul Defenses: Armored chitin Highly acidic blood domages opponents' weapons, hands, etc Immune to exiremes

Specied Abilities: Eyeless, "see" psychically by detecting feor, pain ond hatred up to 300 ". Con climb virtually any surfoce and even walk across ceilings. Communcale psychicolly in the radio spectrum. wolves, mages and changelings.











## ALIEN QUEEN

Even more fearsome thon Ihe standard drone, or worrior xersomorph, is the queen. Ruter and ditector of the hive, she sends the drones out to capture hests for her eggs that the race may thave and expand. In geme terms, she is roughly twice as strong tough and fast as the overage drone. She is more cunning, and her psychic powers moy also be stranger-such as selepothy -if the GM wishas. The queen ran also use har tail to stath us e spearing type attock. if found in her hive, she will be very difficull to spot os she blends info the secretions with which she coots the wells


The Yautia are the greatest hiunters in: the uriverse Aswassin the mover "Predator," their entire culture is cenfoced on thew, we the hurter med they fow m wiqueachable therst for fresin game, The Wexti, alse Sithg alot of speciaticed equijoment
 Whishrefacastight and renders them inswistore. They we tillers wit areode of honer to put in one why Lawul Exil. They ignarehalplass ce? nomeombotere torgetos try to usenonty?
 their turgets une tham-sinde geserally piny toy the rites of the gemer 6 r coume these proder



Sch-at: The human Star Empre wentd like to

 coters must wire hiunthag verntest and bagi


Fawtasy: The Youtha's equipment is maciGel elonk of twisibility enchanted spew and daggens brcees ef treball throwing theme of ecurate targethes ect. Pertaps the predatorta coly eresupscmaly gited, and quite insme Funter gatheing tiophies fom the most pow chid mage in the land fow thecto noomoty/ su his had and since one cf our tarous is a poweft magere or the rautia could bexd Thim nod raceoin an ithed freanoss thescats wich tos finally dicceverod eceargoing ships: Suddenly, these hunter are turning op ail ever, kuling all the dragons and spailing everything for everyone else.

## YAUTJA STATS

## STAR WARS

ATRR18UTE DICE: 13D
DEXTERTY: 30/5D
KNOWLEGG: 20/50, Searth 8D+2
PERCEPION: 2D/4D
STREHGTH: 3D/5D, TECHNICAL: 2D/4D

## AD\&D VAMPIRE

HD $6+3$
AC: 5
THACO: 13
\#ATACKS: 2
DMG: by weapon
PHYSICCL: Str 4, Dex 4, Stm 6 MENTAL: Per 4, lat 3, Wits 4 WILPOWER: 8

HEALTH [EVES: OK $(x 3),-1(x 3)],-2(x 2)$ ATACKS: Gountlel/6 dice, Spear/8 dice, Hurled Disk/ 5 dice; Abililies: Alerfness 4, Braw 6, Dodge 3, Firearns4, Melee 6, Steolh 4, Track 6
MOVE: 7
HEIGH: $7^{\prime}$

MOVE $10 / 12$
MV: 12
SIIE: 1.5-2.2 meters

$$
57 \cdot\left\{17^{\prime} \text { tall }\right\}
$$

Special Attacks: Gruntlels contoin poweful blodes. Telescoping spear hos o heod of eithere end, occelerotes in flight if thrown. Rezor-sharp lirowing dskik returns la thrower effer strikngg. Sometimes uses a barbed alloy nef to restrain prey. Special Deetenses: Tough, resilient hide. Resistunt to higher temperotures.
5pecial Abilities: Sees by thermol vison, athough its hunting mosk ollows it to see in ony parf of the electromagnetic spectrum. Personal daoking device refrectsts light, rendermgg the predolotr pratically invisible.



## MUTANT GRABOIDS

In "Tremars 2: Aftershocks," a smaller, fivelier groboid legs wos apparenily glven birth to by the large worms; this bi-pedal mini-graboid othacked human beings, automobile engines, atc--atlfocted by the haal thay emitied. Other variants of the graboid might be aftracted to smell, various chemical siignotures (like dead hadies or PCBs ), magic (magic ilems, Quintessence or the Faree isseff), maggnetic or elactical fiedids (such as power lines) or aven "cognition" \{people, compurers ond droiss).

B







 these gint wanm lanack elown hastes, grableing unludgy felk out ef Civerablew wh thet tertedes ind stufing thom down thelr guilet
 Treand play hevec with any notursk of rends. Oriy the taps of
 toppled by their massive power. os:


 mining compay, hunting down orevidh ataroids suightere thrs

 by Sheir wemein Griscids mate perfegty good alten monstes for
 travel is by slow-crawling halftracks

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 lorets in thei halls ci stenc? Why stop thenct The forverex


 the graboids on them
D.

 that asuins ons their empenigre of melovelance a graboid

 tious werewolves to battle.

## GRABOID STATS

STAR WARS

TYPE: Burrowing worms DEXTERIFY: 20 PERCEFION: 10, Vibration Sense $30+1$ STRENGTH: 50 , Tentacle Grab/Bite: $5 T R+20$ MEVE: 11 SIZE 7.30 meters long SCAIE: Crealure

ADED
HD 15
AC. 2
THACO: 5 \# ATACKS: 2
DMG: 2-24/2-20
MY: 12 , Br 20
SZ: H/G (20-90')

VAMPITI
PHYSICAL:Str 8, Dex 3, 5tm 6 MENTAL: Per $2, \operatorname{lnt} 1$, Wits 3 WILPOWER: 5 HEALTH LEVESS. OK $\{x 3$ ), $-1(x 5),-3,-5$ ATIACKS: Bite/8 dice, Tentade Grab/5 dice ABiluties: Alertness 3, Browl 4, Stealth 3, Undermine 6 MOVE: Crow/Burrow 10/15

Specid Attacks: Burrow beneath buildings to destroy them.
Special Defenses: Armored carapoce; interior of mouth is only main weak point.
Special Abilities: Graboids can sense vibrations through the earth.


T








 tribe-ft dies. isn't that comforting?

























## BRAIN FOOD FOR KOTHOGA

The kothaga has a desperate nead for humen hypatholamus glonds, located in tha brain; it must devour o humar broin evary three hours or Sose 10 percent of its life Devouring human hreins restores the lost life. At the GM's discretion, other hemanoids-like elves or dwarves-may have a hyporhalemus that poison, superdxazge or hove ne effect on kothoga. If the GM is feeting horribly sadistic, kothogo many be able to diablerize a vampire by feesing on his broin

## KOTHOGA STATS

## AD\&D VAMPIRE

HO $9+1$ PHYSICAL: Ste 7, Dex 4, Sm 4
AC: 5
THACO: 10
\# ATACKS: 2
DMG: 2-16/2 16
HV. 15
5z: 1 ( $20^{\prime}$ long)

MENTAL Per 3, lnil 2, Wits 3
WHIPOWER: 8
HEALTH L LVELS: OK $(x 3),-1(x 4),-3\{x 2), 5$
amacks: Clow/7 dice, Toil Swpe/5 dice, Bie/ / dice
ABILITIES: Alerness 3, Ahtheitics 4, Brow 3 3, Dodge 3,
Stealli 3 , Treark 4
MOVE: Wolk/Run 10/35

SIZE: 6.5 meters long SCALE: Creature Special Attacks: Powerful mandibles can Jear flesh evsily; borbs make estape difficult onee a victim is gratbed Special Defenses: Regenerales domage by consuming human hypothalarus glands or a speciel fungss extrat consisting of human hormones. Thick, learhery hide ormor.
Special Abilities: Leap up to 50 ' stroight up or bockword, or $70^{\prime}$ forward. Con dimazb any isreģular sufface.

# THE BEST IN TOURNAMENTLLEVEL MACIG DECKS 

## KIRTEREENS

 Purple Power
## E1 dag MnNX

Ak.ller deck that uses purple cards? Er, no. Purple cards are found only in inQuest This Standard (Type II) deck focuses on speedy blue cards which, although rare, do exist. Combine fast, effective cards like Spindrift Drake and Unstable Mutation with the quick firepower of red and you've got the ciosest thing you'll get to purple.

The speed of this deck starts with the creatures; the cornerstone card is the aforementioned Spindrift Drake. For only one blue mana you get a $2 / 1$ fiying creature. Sure, you've gotta pay a blue mana during your upkeep to keep it around, but it's well worth it. To improve your odds of getting a first-turn creature, there are also four Mogg Fanatics. Unless your opponent wastes a counterspell on these self-sacrificing dudes, they're guaranteed to hit your opponent for at least a point of damage each.

Once you've got one of these puppies out, they're both prime targets for Unstable Mutation, If your opponent doesn't have suitable blockers, don't hesitate to get the damage rolling. The Mutations aren't in the deck so you can display your tactical genius.

Six more useful creatures round out the roster-two each of Mogg Maniac, Man-o'-War and Ophidian. Like the Fanatics, the Maniacs will usually get their licks in, even if it's a suicide attack where your opponent will take damage even if he blocks. Players relying on the likes of Earthquakes and Incinerates to off your creatures will get some of it served back in their face.

The Man-o'-Wars and Ophidians are all about that catch phrase of the " 90 s-"card advantage." The Man-0'-Wars clear the way for your Unstable creatures, as well as forcing your opponent to waste a tum by recasting his creature. If you've got a counterspell, said creature may not see the light of day again. Given the option between doing a point of damage and drawing a card with an unblocked Ophidian, you should almost always choose the card-unless, of course, your opponent is at one life...

"Aw c'anon. Kill me, an' then your can turn to avill!"
Speaking of card advantage, being able to maximize the use of your cards in play kind of counts as an advantage, which is the main reason why the Coblin Bombardment is in the deck. More than likely, your opponent will be able to off several of your creatures. If you can happen to nail him for a few points of damage before the creatures go down-or even kill one or two of his creatures, so much the better.

However, the Bombardment becomes especially potent when used in conjunction with Reins of Power. After stealing your opponent's creatures and attacking or using their special abilities, you can chuck them at your opponent with the Bombardment, causing more damage and leaving him with no creatures. If it's tactically sound, you also might want to consider sacrificing all of your creatures before you make the switch, ensuring that your opponent has no defenders.

If this option comes into play, there are two critical considerations you must make: First, if your opponent is playing with any blue, give your opponent his opportunity to counter the Reins before sacrificing your creatures. Second, consider the amount of

## KIIL, KIIL, KIIL

| blue greatures | 8LLE SPELLS | RED CPEATURES | LHOS |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 2 Man-0 $0^{\text {a }}$-War | 1 Lneestral K Kowledfy | 4 Mingeg Famaia | 4 City of Brass |
| 2 Ophidija | 4 Courterspel | 2 Mogg Maxis | 12 Isaas |
| 4 Spiodrift Drak | 2 Hemitation |  | 7 Mentaiin |
|  | 2 tmplise | RED SPELLS |  |
|  | 2 Mana Leak | 1 Gahtiam |  |
|  | 2 Rans of Pewer | Bonharamat |  |
|  | 4 Unastable Mritation | 4 Ineinerats |  |
|  | 2 Whispers of the |  |  |



 walk was nevert the same."
cards you and your opponent have in hand; if your opponent has several cards and you don't, trashing your creatures in play could cost you the game in the long run

The key to winning with this deck is quickly taking the advantage and then keeping it. Once you have the edge, Hesitation is the card that will help you keep it. As long as you have ä better spread of creatures in play than your opponent, playing Hesitation is to your benefit. "I nobody has any creatures in play, you'll probably want to put one into play anyway...this deck kicks if you can get several land out. Just make sure your opponent isn't playing with a larger deck than you, or you'? be forced to waste a spell (or deck yourself).

Basically, If the board is even or if you have the edge, play Hesitation. No subtle strategies here-your goal is to make your opponent waste a spell or die at the hands of the creatures you have in play. However, be careful if you have an Unstable Mutation in play-eventually, it (and the creature it's on) will go away.

Traditional blue mages like to have some regular countering ability at their disposal. No problem. With four Counterspells and two Mana Leaks, you should be able to handle most major threats. Especially watch out for mass-destruction spells like Armageddon and Wrath of God-they can be the bane of this deck. Traditional red mages like to have firepower-so you've got four incinerates at your disposal. These can also be used in conjunction with the Mogg Fanatics or Goblin Bombardment to kill larger creatures.

Of course, all this is for naught if you don't draw the cards you need. Whispers of the Muse and Impulse let you filter through your deck, and the Whispers gives you a card-drawing engine if the duel lasts for a while. Ancestral Knowledge has many uses, but perhaps the most important is the ability to sift excess land out of your deck. Unless your opponent is playing land destruction, take advantage of this opportunity to thin your deck.

The sideboard is straightforward. Two extra Mana Leaks give you extra protection against mass-destruction spells and two Pyroblasts help you go head-to-head with blue mages. Against creature-heavy decks stock an extra Reins of Power and more creature-elimination, insert the Disenchants if you're facing a gimmick deck and pile in the Wastelands if your opponent is playing a four- or five-color deck.

There are multiple ways to play this deck, and there will come some times when you have to make strategic decisions, but it's really all about piling on the damage as soon as possible. Because, hey, if you say you're playing purple, you want to be sure you can kick your opponent's butt.

Following in the footsteps of Donny Osmond and Prince, Jeff wears purple socks to work every day.

First there was instant coffee, then there was instant eatI meal. Nowadays you can even get instant turkey breast. Well, to get into the spirit of today's fast-food soclety, we've put together a Magic deck that's sure to be an instant hit. The only spells are instants and creatures that can be played as instants. We would have eliminated land as well, but relying on four Elvish Spirit Guides for all your mana wouldn't have worked ost too well.

With so many instants, you've got a litte bit of everything, and the beauty is that you can cast all of your spells whenever you want. Need offense? King Cheetahs and Benalksh Knights can deliver consistent purch. op try taking your opponent's creatures with Reins of Power, Ray of Command or Jabarl's influence.

There's also plenty of defense, incłuding honorable Passage, Invulnerability and Reverse Damage. And since all the spells in this deck can be cast at any time, the deck is laden with combos. Gare to Fling a Tidal Wave?

So give this deck a try, 'cause we guaranteo-you're gonna love it in an instant.

E Instant Jeff Hannes (justadd waler)

## BLUE

1 Capsize 1 1mputse 1 Mystical Tutor 2 Reins of Power 2 Ray of Command 2 Tidal Wave 1 Whispers of the Muse

GREEN
1 Constant mists
4 Kigg cheetah
RED
1 Blood Lust 2 Binder Gloud 1 Fling 4 Incinerate 2 Lightning Blast

## WHITE

4 Benalish Knight
2 Disenchant
1 Eye for an Eye
1 Honorable Passage
1 invuinerability
1 Jabari's Influence
1 Revarse Bamage

## LAND

1 Adarkar Wastes
2 Brushland
3 Gemstone Mine
5 Island
2 Karplusan Forest
5 Hountain
5 Plains
1 Reflecting Pool


# KD2 Bनापनाह्वम 

## . 1 STEVE ZAMBORSNY

Arsenal, the latest expansion for the BottleTech TCG, has lots of cool new types of cards that you pilots are just titchn' to try out. You've got your new Clan Battle Armors, Legacies from the Inner Sphere flying everywhere, even some Trials to settle when two clans tangle. Me, I hike machinery-big, heavy, rumbling machinery that reminds me of ridin' on the tractor on my uncle's farm in lowa...but l'll save that for another article.

For now, let's talk about vehicless. Arsenal has got 'em, and they're generally more pumped-up attack-wise than their mech counterparts-If you're willing to take the gamble. You see, if a vehicie is ever damaged, you must roll a die; on a roli of six, the vehicle is scrapped. You're probably thinking, "Why would I take my chances on sometame vehicles that have an almost 17 percent chance of being scrapped if a piece of shrapnel blows their way?" Well, press on, elite mechwarrior. You'll get your answer soon enough.

See, most vehicles have better stats than mechs of an equivaient cost. This deck exploits vehicles to the max, giving your opponent some pretty nasty fits along the way. Also, vehicles aren't affected by any cards that say "target mech" on them. No Communications Failure, no Heavy Fog, no Dropship Intercept, and hey-Misrouted Command this! You can't be touched by any cards that say, "Choose an opposing mech, yada yada yada..." Most of the cards currently in the game target only mechs, including ones beneficial to your robotic army. Notice I say, "mostly." This Inner Sphere deck is designed to exploit all the bonuses you can get from vehicles and it gives you a couple of nasty combos to ponder.

Let's take a look at the vehicles in the deck first. Both Cyrano and Cavalry are low cost, fast vehicles that have the VTOL trait. This makes their attacks virtually unblockable; patrolling mechs and vehicles without VTOL can't block'em. Now, you know that if a mech or vehicle is guarding your opponent's stockpile, he'd be able to block, right? This forces your opponent to guard his

"Fat Mbert 305s: Mesk Mouth takes Manbattan."
stockpile, giving him one less mech with which he can attack you. But wait, it gets better!

There's a new nasty little command card called Suicide Troops; there are six in this deck, if you haven't looked yet. This enhancement only attaches to a vehicle; if that vehicie attacks unblocked, put a "guerrila counter" on the site you attacked. During your opponent's repair/reload phase, for each "guerrilla counter" on each site, Suicide Troops deals two damage to that site. Your opponent can lose the counters by tapping mechs and vehicles equal to the number of counters he wants to get rid of and scrapping twice as many cards. It's a win-win situation for you! Your opponent will either have to scrap cards each turn or let down his defenses and scrap a bunch at once.

The other major attacking vehicles are the Ontos LRM Variants and Pumas. While not really heavy-hitters in the offense department, they've got decent armor and structure values-and three missiles each! The Ontos gives you a three-missile vehicle for a base cost of two. That's why the NAIS are in the deck, by the way-not to smash up your own vehicles whenever you feel like it. For even more firepower, enhance one of the rocket

# GENTLEMEN, START YOUR ENGINES! 

VEHICLES
6 Gayaly
4 Бутans
3 Demolisher 3 Mag
4 Ontos LRM Yariant 4 Puma

## COMMAND CARDS

 2 Assembly 3 Fareo-Fibrous Upgrade 6 Hot-Loaded LRM 6 Logistins 2 Mals 6 Sricida Troops 5 Tacties 4 Think Tank 2 Yeticile Repair Ram
## SIDEBOARD

5 Wisrourted Gomianands
3 Underwardd Connections

| Syid |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| Cyrano Bulldog <br> Ontes LRM Variant  Bulldog LRM Variant |  |
| Puma | Ontos-3058 |
| Magi | Demen |


"Stand fast men! They're after ous fruil ples!"
launcners with Hot-Loaded LRMS This enhancement gives a mech or vehicle with the missile option $+X$ attack, with " $X$ " being the number of missiles it can fire. The downside is that it can be more easily scrapped; however, in this deck, scrap metai is what you're after: Go through vehicles like you would aluminum caris. Vehicles aren't meant to stay around; they're meant to run over everything in their paths.

Rounding out your assortment of vehicles are two types that will add to your defenses-the Magi and the Demolishers. The Magi don't really pack a punch with their 1 attack; but for a base cost of 1 , they've still got 2 armor and 7 structure to keep your stockpile well-guarded. The Demolishers hit a little harder. For a base 3, they've got a 2 attack, 3 armor and 5 structure, and they can Alpha Strike for +4 attack. With Demolishers and Magi guarding your stockpile, your opponent doesn't stand a chance of getting through your defenses early in the game.

A couple of other cards from Arsenal round out the assault. Ferro-Fibrous Upgrade is an enhancement that basically makes all your vehicles more difficult to kill; if the enhanced vehicle receives damage, you can prevent up to three damage to that vehicle and scrap the Ferro-Fibrous Upgrade instead. It's great for protecting your little VTOL vehicles like Cyrano and Cavalry.

Also, don't overiook a handy resource card called Vehicle Repair Barn. Yes, not only can you tap it for resources, but you can also tap it to repair one point of structure clamage to each of your Vehicles. If you've got both of your Barns out, your opponent better pray for methods besides mere damage to deal with your mean machines.

Included in the sideboard is a special combo for your hapless opponent that I like to call, "Going Nowhere Fast." If your opponent is only playing with mechs and no vehicles, sub in all eight of these cards. Misrouted Command is a staple in lots of solid Battle Tech decks. With Underwarld Connections, your opponent will never be able to use his mechs again-unless you let him. Simply Misroute the mech that's giving you the most trouble and use Underworld Connections to keep that mech replete with diversion counters ad infinitum. Don't forget to use a Thunk Tank for Politics when you get one, though.

So listen up, rookie. You've got what you need now to run over your opponents full steam. Grab your keys, fire up those engines and start driving!

Steve Zamborsky can't wait for the new Battle rech expansion Oblong Objects so he can pilot his 7975 Beetle BTL-7 to victory.

# UPYOURSLLEEVE Tomano Liso 

Irsenal brings us one of the most potent combo cards in the Hgame-Iormano liap. This personality can tap or untap a command eard during your mission phase. Big dealp You bot it is. There are so many command cards that tap when they work for you in the game, it's not even funny. It especially won't be funny to your opponent when you bring ol' Tomano into play.

The uses of being able to untap a command card are many. You've got a mercenary out, brit he'll only work for you once a turni? Tormano will convince him to work for you again next mission, or maybe Tormano feels like putting a major hurt on one of your opponent's cards which is currently under construction. Tap your Nekekani Sabotage for the five damage, use Tormano to untap and repeat. With Adam Steiner, you can untap two of your mechs each turn, or get Tormano to help with the Airdropped Supplies.

Here's one of my favorites: You've got a Time Bomb ticking away for your opponent. You can use Underworld Connections to add another counter to the Bomb, then use your Gonnections again thanks to formarno. It looks fike time is running out for your apponent! Or just go for simply getting the most out of mission" heiping eards like Doc Trevena or Jump Troops; with Tormano you use them for more than one mission.
of course, it's enough that Tormano can do all these things, but that's just one aspect of his ability, he can also tap any command card in play. Even though he can only do this during your missions phase, It's still a handy ability. Your apponent can say "bye-bye" to the mercenary he just bought to protect himself; Tormano paid him off.

There are dozens of possibilities, and with each new expansionand more command cards that can be tapped during the missions phase-Tormano is sure to become even bettor. F Steve Zamborkly


Tomaras Lao is the ultemate utility combo carf.

FILLING THE SHOES OF THE WORLD'S WORST M A G C PLAYER DEAD MAN'S



## YOU CAN'T WIN.

Despite your best efforts, Eugene T. Dudley, the worst Magic player in the world, is struggling at the end of a grueling match. His opponent, Steve "Slowpoke" Sluman, has been ploying a Stasis deck to perfection-enough so that despite Eugene's best efforts, he finds himself tompletely topped out, foting a Stasis and a Kismet. Even worse, our hero's library and groveyord are completely emply, so he is looking af yef another discouraging defect despite still being al full life.

For a conventionol player, this would be a worry. Of course, Eugene realizes that all he really has to do is untap all of his permonents and the game is his-at a palitry 6 life, Steve would quickly die before his onslaught. A bil puzzled, Eugene hos asked you to halp him. The gool? Have all of Eugene's permonents unfapped ot the same time of some point during his turn.

## GEEP IN MIND THE FOLIOWING:

- It's the beginning of your turn.
- Stave is only at 6 life, so you might just puli this one out For Eugene.
- Eugene is of 20 life and a bit cocky obout it.
- You have no cords in either your librory or groveyord.
- All lands, creatures, and artifocts in play-including

Steve's-are tapped.

- All you have to do is moke sure all of your permanents ore untapped at the same time at any point in the turn.


## [AND

Snow-covered Forest x2 Snow-covered isfend Snow-covered Swemp x2 Volrath's Stronghoid

## CARDS IN PLAY

Bolduvian Conijurer (ily of Solitide Crypt Rols Elder Druid Forbidden Cryp! Inituates of the Ehoan Hand Intruder Alorm Oath of Lim-Dul Orcish Lumberjack Qustion Ronger Theionite Monk Woll of Rools

## CAROSIN HAND

Soomerong Cireling Vultures Elvish Spirth Guide Psychic Purge Snow-covered Island Sppinning Darknass Twiddle

## THE CONIEST

Mail in your step-by-step solution to:
DEAD MAN'S HAND:
TAPPED OUT
C/O inousst
PO BOX 118 CONGERS NY 10920-0118 The winner, rondomly chosen from all correst entries, will snag a box of Stronghold. All entries must be pastmarked no later then Jute 26, 1998.

## THIS MONTH'S DIFFICULTY RATING:

$\square$

## LAST MONTH'S "TOKEN MANIA" SOLUTION:

1. Untop the Bottomless Yoult.
2. Tap the Tradewind Rider and two taken treatures lo retum the Takklenxaggot to Turkey's hoond. (You hove 21 creaturos in play. 1
3. Top the Bollomless Vrult for five herck mana and the bwo Urza's Towers for six colortess manno. Cost Cortion ond sarsifice the Sliver Queen, (27 ceorlures.)
4. Activate the Bīsium Slitip.
5. Cost Carrion trem your groveyord ond socrifice the Phelddo. grif. 130 creatures.)
6. Pay the Tombslone Slairwel's upkeep ( 32 arentures.)
7. Druw the Moursolain and pul if into ploy.
8. Top oll but one of your lands (the Forest ar Dufpost) for 14 mana. (Sacrifice she Dworven Hoid for two ree mana.)
9. Cost Sartambray le creide a $2 / 2$ Zombie. ( 33 creatures.) 10. Cost Lab Ruts to creve a Rol token. \{34 creatures.)
10. Using the still-adive Bösium Strip, cast Lab Rais to create another Rot. ( 35 creatures.)
11. Advave the Spike Breeder to create o $1 / 1$ green Ioken. (36 creatures)
12. Sacrifice the Prism loken for sed menn. (35 croatures.)
13. Cost Mogesalitestation on yourself. (70 creatures, ill iokens.)

I5. Use the still-valive Bōsium strip to cost Moge infestalion agoin, giving a wkapping totol of 140 loken creatures.


## FREQUEAILY AS \& ED GUESTIQMS OH MACPR Hil MATHIAMMG

Q: If a Volrath's Laboratory puts a second Legend token into play, will the newlycreated token go to the graveyard?
-Joseph Maddison, Minneapolis, Minn. A: Yes. The name of the tokens created by a Volrath's Laboratory is the same as their type, so they are subject to legendary burial.

Q: I have a Vodalian Illusionist in play and I use Shallow Grave to bring a Scaled Wurm into play. Can I attack, and then phase the Wurm out so it won't be removed from the game?
-Kevin Lambert, Phoenix, Arız. A: Yes, since the Wurm won't be in play when the Shallow Grave tries to remove from the game at the end of the turn. The Shallow Grave won't affect the creature after the first turn, so the Wurm is permanently in play.

Q: Can I sacrifice an Island to my Abjure? -Keth A Morris, Linden, N.C. A: No. Even though they produce colored mana, lands themselves are colorless.

Q: I play a Krakilin, setting $X$ equal to eight, while a Humulity is in play. Is it a 1/1 or a 9/9?
-Andey Culpepper, Dundee, N.Y. A: When you're calculating the power and toughness of a creature, you must apply counters before other effects. The net result is that the Kraklin becomes a $1 / 1$.

Q: If I use a Sorceress Queen on a creature with some $+1 /+1$ counters on it, will the counters be addied on to the Sorceress Queen's 0/2 effect?

- Craig Churchill, Mount Pearl, Canada A: No. Since the counters are applied before the normal effect, the creature will be $0 / 2$.

Q: If I cast Mana Chains on my opponent's creature and he does not pay the upkeep, can I respond by casting Enchantment Alteration to switch the Mana Chains to another one of his creatures?
--Chris Stewart, Tawas City, Mich.
A: Yes. The original creature will be
sacrificed, and the new creature's controller will have to deal with a cumulative upkeep of one this upkeep.

Q: When Thran Forge makes my creatures into artifact creatures, do they lose their colors?
-Thomas K. Schrader, Oswego, N.Y.


A: They retain their colors, since Thran Forge does not change creatures to colorless.

Q: Can I sacrifice a Badiands to my Rathi Dragon? How about a Sulfurous Springs? -Trevor Graharm Schechter, New York, N.Y. A: Badlands, which says that it counts as a mountain, can be sacnficed to the Rathi Dragon. Sulfurous Springs, however, does not count as a mountain, and therefore cannot be used to pay the coming-intoplay cost of the Dragon.

Q: Golgothian Sylex destroys all cards from the Antiquities expansion. Will this destroy an Ivory Tower reprinted in Revised?
-Adam Parker, Minneapolis, Minn. A: No. Cards like Golgothian Sylex only destroy cards with the appropriate expansion symbol on them. This does include Chronicles cards, however, since they too have expansion symbols from their original sets.

Q: If a Krakilin is brought into play using an Animate Dead, what is its toughness? -Michael D. Hicks, Nederland, Texas A: Its toughness will be zero. Since it's not
being cast, the $X$ is considered to be zero, and it won't come into play with any $+1 /+1$ counters.


Q: When the last counter is removed from a spell that's been delayed by Ertai's Meddling, can I attempt to counter it again?
-Michael Beardeu, Paragould, Ariz. A: No. The spell will resolve as soon as the last counter is removed.

Q: If my creature is blocked by my opponent's creature, and I cast Ray of Command on my opponent's creature, will they still deal damage to each other? -Westley Bennett, Norfolk, Va. A. No. If a creature changes controllers, it's removed from combat. Your attacking creature is still considered blocked and won't deal damage to your opponent unless it has trample.

Q: All of the cards in my graveyard are green, as are all the cards in my library, including a Gaea's Blessing. If my opponent uses a Grindstone on me, what happens?
-Jerred Chate, Keller, Texas
A: The Grindstone's ability must finish resolving before the Gaea's Blessing can take effect. Your entire library will be put into your graveyard, and then the Gaea's Blessing will shuffle your graveyard back into your library.

Q: I'm attacking with an Elven Warhounds, and my opponent blocks with a Dream Fighter. Will the Fighter be put on top of the library or will it phase out first?
-Nick Steidl, Dallas, Pa.
A: The player who is taking his turn plays his tnggered ability first, putting the Dream Fighter on top of the library. Then, the other player's triggered ability is played, phasing out the Elven Warhounds.

Q: Can I use Deflection to make Final Fortune affect my opponent?
-Ryan Rodriguez, Plantation, Fla. A: No. Final Fortune is not a targeted spell, and Deflection can only be used on spells
with a single target. Only spells which actually say "target" are considered targeted spells. The exception is local enchantments, whose targeting requirement is described by their card type.

Q: If Eladamni, Lord of the Leaves is in play, can my opponent cast Extinction naming "elves?"
-Mike Newton, Palatine, III. A: Yes. The Extinction is not a targeted spell, so Eladamri can't prevent it from working.

Q: What happens if I cast Dark Ritual while a Hesitation is in play?
-Stephen Hobson and Nick
Richardson, Worthing, England A: Mana sources are announced and resolved in a single event, so the Dark Ritual will successtully resolve. Then, the Hesitation tries to counter the Dark Ritual and fails because the spell is no longer being cast. The Hesitation will still go to the graveyard, however.


Q: If a Gravebane Zombie is killed by a Krovikan Vampire, where does the Zombie go?
-Ken Zavodney, Murfreesboro, Tenn. A. The Gravebane Zomble goes to the top of its owner's library, and since it is no longer in the graveyard, the Krovikan Vampire cannot put it into play at the end of the turn.

Q: If my opponent has a Rathi Dragon in play and I copy it with my Echo Chamber, what happens?
-Tom Alfonse, Dartmouth, Mass.
A. Your token counts as coming into play, so you must sacrifice two mountains or bury the token.

Collin Jackson has always wanted to stomp through a toy city just like Godzilla.


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# HOUSE <br> THE BEST IN GAME VARIANTS: 

Dark Viciory
By Jason Schneiderman
At the Day of Thunder world champlonships the greatest heroes of Rokugan united to defeat the malevolent god that dwelled in the body of the emperor. The horrible undead army fell before the might of the Unicorn cavalry. And, In the real world, the creators of Legend of the Five Rings told the story of Doji Hoturl's death and Joturl's ascension to the throne.

But what if that fateful day had gone differently? Chris Bergstrom doosn't take the Lion clan to victory; instead, it's some nameless player with a Yogo Junzo's Army deck that comes in flrst at the touriament. With trembling fingers, Bave Williams is forced to open, rather than tear up, the envelope labeled "EVIL WMS," and watch as the world he created falls into a thousand yaars of dariness.

As in a slandard gome of Legend of the Five Rings, the object is to destroy oll of your opponeni's provinces, reach 40 fomily honar, bring your opponent to - 20 tamily konor or bring all five elamental rings into play.

Everyone neads their own legol 15 R decths, both Dynasiy ond Fate. All cards that refer to the Thunders are bonned. This iscluteres the various Clon Thunders, the Mountoin of the Seven Thunders, A Soul of Thunder und sa on. You may nol use the stronghotds of deod clans.

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To do will in this variarif yor'll sased to please Empanse fu lang.

Dark Lord, as detailed on the card of the same name. The favor has the following abilities:

Limited: Target a player who must discard à card from his hand.

Open: Dishonor a target personality.

Battie: Reduce one opposing card's force to zero.

Reaction: Reduce one honor gain to zero.

Only fallen clans may lobby for or use the Dark Lord's Favor. However,

## LIVING <br> WITHOUT HONOR

There is little room in the Thousand Year Reign for the "honor" of Rokugan. The old virtues are practiced in secret, but brutality and treachery are the order of the day, On the other hand, the monstrous Fu leng gives his respect to those who curry his favor or practice abominable acts.

In game terms, this means that both noble and fallen clans can gain honor, and even reach victory from it. However, they do so in very different ways. Fallen clans gain no honor from bringing personalities into play at full cost, nor may they gain honor from bowing holdings. However, taking an action that would normally cause a player to lose honor instead causes an honor gain of half value, rounded down. For example, a Crane player who played a Kolat Assassin gaıns two honor. Bringing a Black Market into play gains him one honor. Bowing it for gold, however, gains no honor. This does not apply to actions played against a fallen clan piayer: A Shame will still cause a loss of seven family honor. In addition, all fallen clan characters are presumed to die dishonorably, causing a loss of farmily honor. Fu Leng has little tolerance for failure.

Noble clans operate under the standard $L S R$ rules for honor.

## DARK LORD'S FAVOR

The Imperial Favor has been replaced by the favor of the

## 

The cians allied with fur Leng have been rewarded for their trenchery. All numerical stats remain the same.

## Imperial Netpat Dragon Kountain

When this family loses a provisce, add two Strength points permanently to atly your remaining provinces. Your opponenents may reach - 20 honor without losing the game.

Limised: Bow a samurai you control to challenge o personality to a duel that maty not be refused.

## The Provincial Estates of the Crane

You begin play with the Dark Lord's Fovor in your possessian. You may sol win by a Miltary Yictory.

Linsted: If you have lise highast family honor, you may bow this stronghold to lobby for the favor instead of bowing a personality.

## The Tainted Halls of the Phoentix

You may never bring on Elementol Ring into play.
Bow to produce nine gold when bringing o shugenja into ploy. The Shugenja involved grains the Shodowlands troil permonently.

Reaction: Bow when bringing a spell inio play lo reduce its gald cost to zero.

## Yogo danzos Horde

You cannot gain er lase honos. Your cards ure inmmene to feor. Your Personalities moy not swear feally. You may nol fake politicel actions or actions which touse anather player an honor loss.

Reaction: Bow when bringing 0 Shadowfands card into play to reduce the gold cost of the card by four.


## Hinamive H:T Tr:Tullis INSPIRATION \& ADVICEFOR =AHIAIANAT



A5 your players open the scrol, the words unfurling before them read that six adventurers will gather om all parts of the globe to defeat the invading goblin amies...below that-scrawled in blood-lie the names of all the player characters (PCs). There is a moment of dead silence...before one of your players smacks you upside the head with a half-empty bag of Cheesy Poofs. "What? Not that old 'prophecy' shtick again!" They stomp out of your home in a murderous rage, but not before burning all your gaming supplies.

Assembling a group of adventurers for any scenario without resorting to clichés or plot devices the players have seen a zillion times can be a daunting task, but there are two major ways to improve your chances of generating something new and surprising: "pre-playing" and "the coincidence."

## КNW TMOR PRAYERS

Before the first session takes place, you need to take some time out to come up with good ways to "gather your flock." To do this, it's necessary to know the PCs motivations. The best way to accomplish this? Have your players fill out bio sheets. A bio sheet is a short list of questions the player answers about his character to give you more information about his prior life and goals than the character sheet with its stats and equipment list can provide.

Some sample questions: Where does the PC hail from? Why does he go adventuring? What events in his past most affected him? The answers to these questions and others like them give you something to work with when linking iterns or events in the characters* histories. Is one player seeking revenge on the six-fingered sellsword who slew his father? Guess what? That same multi-digited individual is now the right-hand man of the malicious prince who has kidnapped the true love of another PC. Another PC used to work miracles for the same prince before he was unceremoniously discarded for being too old. The more detailed the bio, the better. Just make sure your players remember that their characters are beginners; their pasts shouldn't be
more adventurous than their futures.
Before you send your PCs into the world, make sure you as GM know:

- Where they were born. Where did they spend most of their lives? Could they have run into each other before the first game session without knowing? Could a number of PCs have been present at the same major historic event?
- The most important personal relationships of their pre-game days. Could the PCs be related by blood or by their relationships to a teacher, lover or ruler?
- Their skills \& occupation. What skills do they possess that may lead them to encounter one another?
- What they own. What kind of equipment or personal items do they carry beyond the ordinary?
- Their reasons and motivations for embarking on an adventurous career. Are they searching for something in particular, looking for some quick cash to pay off debts, in search of the adrenaline high or on the run from the law?

Possessing the answers to these questions before you start will prove to be an invaluable asset in assembling your PCs cliché-free.

## "PREPLAYING"

Whise more work for the gamemaster, playing with the characters one-on-one-soloing-allows you the greatest chance for coming up with something innovative to link your characters

## Characters' pasts shouldn't be more adventurous than their futures.

together as a party. You not only get to see how they play, but it allows you to maneuver PCs into positions which allow them to meet less than haphazardly.

For instance, let's say you're running a Stor Wars adventure. Soloing with your first player, you discover that he is a smuggler, motivated only by profit. During one of his smuggling runs, Imperial forces under GM control board his vessel, and he's forced to dump his contraband overboard to avoid arrest. Now hunted by the crimelord who hired him, the smuggler is forced into hiding on a backwater planet where he conveniently meets PC number two, a novice warrior who decides to go adventuring after he meets PCs number three and four, two droids with a mission who have just escaped the Empire. What seem like chance meetings allow the GM to assemble a party without the actions seeming deliberate or forced. These meetings take time to develop.

Similarly, you can condense the process if you're pressed for time. Pick a couple of characters with similar backgrounds and say they meet on the road. Get them talking to each other: A couple of warriors could share memories of battles in which they've fought; two potential campaign members may discover that they are from the same geographical area; maybe they share the same religion. Though more difficult than soloing-especially if your PCs haven't fleshed out their backgrounds-this initial session will help smooth out the story for the rest of your campaign. However, if your players just hand you a stat sheet and ask you to go to it, you're definitely better off going with...


If al all possibibe, steer owoy from plots and devices thal would set your P(s al odos.

## "THE CONCIDENEE"

If you were to run an adventure like the "prophecy" example mentioned in the opening-attempting to assemble the PCs and begin cold in one burst-it would fall into this category. The trick here is to stay away from cliches-plot devices like the prophecy that have been done to death. Using the coincidence method is straightforward: simply get all the players in the same place at the same time and give them a common goal or bond. This is deceptively easy on the surface, but you must remember that there has to be something to keep the party together after the initial meeting or adventure. For example:

- The PCs happen to be in the same city when riots take place during an anti-war protest. The PCs are arrested, whether or not they were actual participants, and due to an overburdened legal system, they are rushed through a kangaroo court to a death sentence. Now, they must unite to escape or die on the block. After they've joined up, you can set the adventure hook with information possessed by one or more of the players.
- The ruler of a small country needs a dangerous task accomplished as soon as possible so he sets a contest. Teams, assembled randomly, will race to accomplish the goal with a king's ransom going to the winning team.
- Vampire hunters descend en mass on your PC vampires' city of choice. Now, despite their differences, the individuals must band together in order to assure their survival-either by fleeing or discovering the reason behind the hunters' sudden arrival.

Setting up an adventure and assembling a party is just like school in some ways; you're going to get out of it exactly what you put into it. If you and your piayers are willing to spend the extra time to write bio sheets and solo adventure before you get into the actual campaign, you're going to have a better roleplaying experience-with an emphasis on the fully fleshed-out "role." If you jump right into an adventure, you'li get a quick fix of action. But just like most things in life, how you begin a campaign depends on personal preference and initiative.

Brent Fishbaugh is just glad that all thase creative writing classes in college are starting to pay off. Or are they?

n the far distant future, bazooka-wielding Orks stride through bloody battlefields, while veterans of the Imperial Guard hunker down in their tanks and brace themselves for the onslaught. Game Workshop's Warhommer 40,000 (also known as Warhammer 40K) is your passport to this dark vision of the 40th millennium. The sTa:IECIES ant RAME IDEHS FOM BECHIEAS by robert aller mightiest armies of the age are yours to command.

THE ARMIES
In building a Warhammer 40 K army, you get a certain number of points to spend. Generally, the better an army rates in such areas as speed, shooting accuracy, weaponry and close combat prowess, the more points you'll have to spend to acquire it.

A single space Marine is far superior to an Imperial Guardsman. His weapon, the trusted bolter, is likewise superior to the Guardsman's lasgun. However, the space Marine costs 30 points, whereas the Guardsman costs only 10. In other words, you can buy three Guardsmen for the price of a single Marine. While one Space Marine will wipe the floor with a lone Imperial Guardsman, he'll have his hands full facing three of them.

The bottom line: The huge advantage afforded skilled armies is usually balanced by the sheer number of cannon fodder troops you can buy with the same number of points. Here's a rundown on the most common Warhammer 40 K armies:

SPACE MARINES
STRENCTHS: Imperial Space Marines are truly jacks-of-all-trades. Their soldiers are among the most powerful as they also have access to some of the best support in the game-Land Rajder tanks and Space Marine


Dreadnoughts, powerful walkers which are well-armed and difficult to kill. Few armies can outshoot the Space Marines or match their general flexibility.
WEAKNESSES: Alas, all this flexibility comes at a high point cost. Space Marines kick ass, but they are defintely the few, the proud and-usually-the outnumbered.
GENERAL TACTICS: Marines are fast and flexible. That's their thing. Pound the enemy with Devastator Squads, Dreadnoughts, Predator Tanks and Terminators and then use your superior speed to exploit an opening.

## IMPERIAL GUARD

STRENGTHS: The Imperial Guard are the groundpounders. They are cheap and plentiful-devastating in mass attacks where numbers count more than skill. They can field a powerful assortment of tanks and also have useful support units: Ogryns, massive abhumans who can take severe abuse and dish out the damage with their impressive ripper guns; Ratling Snipers, diminutive "halflings" who are excellent shots with their needler sniper rifles; and Rough Riders, fast attack cavalry, armed with explosive hunting lances. WEAKNESSES: Basic Imperial Guardsmen are poorly armed


"huryy w, lads! We have to take those stairs!"
and armored. They are also not well-suited for hand-to-hand combat and have low-powered characters.
GENERAL TACTICS: You've got lots of troops with long range weapons. Sit back on a hill somewhere and hammer your enemies from afar. Avoid hand-to-hand combat, but be prepared to blitzkrieg in if a weakness presents itself.

## SISTERS OF BATTLE

STRENGTHS: The Sisters of Battle are powered armor troops like the Space Marines. Battle Sisters are armed with bolters and heavy weapons, while the specialized Seraphim can jump-pack across the battlefield to devastate their enemies with massed pistol fire or grenades. The Sisters can also field

## GETTING STARTED:

Wartammer $\mathbf{4 0 , 0 0 0}$ Box Came, $\$ 69.99$. Big box of armies. All of the rules, miniatures, templates, dice and background you need to start playing.
Mark MIllennium, 339.99 . Adds more vehicles and psychics to your game. Also includes rules for victory points and strategy cards.

## RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTS:

The codex of your cholce, \$19.89-\$24.89. Each 40k army has its own codex which describes its features: pick an army that interests you and buy that bookd
Miniatures, starding at \$5.99. You probably won't stop with the minis from the box set. You'll want new squads, vehicles and characters. Then, you'll want to start that second army...

a variety of Eccelstarchy troops, including powerful characters and mobs of Frateris Militia. Although poorly armed and skilled, the Frateris Militia can often overwhelm the enemy with sheer numbers.
WEAKNESSES: The Sisters have poor support capabilities. They are also limited to only a few squad and character types. GENERAL TACTICS: Divide your forces into two groups: a static anvil and a fast-moving hammer. The anvil-consisting of Battle Sister squads with bolters and heavy weaponspours fire onto the enemy, while the hammer-consisting of Seraphim and perhaps an Immolator tank-quickly flanks the enemy to surround and crush them.

## ORKS

STRENGTHS: Mean and green. Orks are a massive army, with six different clans and a. wide variety of weird and powerful weaponry. In addition to being strong as a horde, Orks often possess weaponry that widely varies in effect. Some of their guns-Kustom Shootas, for example-can either be less powerful than a regular bolter or more powerful than a lascannon. They also have fast and well-armed bikes and light vehicles-like buggies and wartracks. The Orks are a gambler's army, but they're always fun to play. With troop names like "Blood Axe Kommandos," "Madboys" and "Freebooterz," how can you go wrong?
WEAKNESSES: Ork weaponry is rather variable in effect: sometimes great, sometimes horrible. Orks also have low leadership and lack strong characters.
GENERAL TACTICS: Orks swarm opponents. Individually they can't hit the broadside of a barn, but get them in a mob, and they're murder. Move to close range and use your mass firepower to wreak havoc. At all costs, avoid close encounters with big nasties like daemons, Space Marines and Eidar avatars.


STRENGTHS: Chaos Marines were once a part of the imperium, but rebelled and were cast out 10,000 years ago. They function a lot like their Imperial counterparts, except that they lack some of the hi-tech equipment. However, they more than make up for this with the awesome powers of chaos on their side-diemons, Bezerkers, Noise Marines and a wide array of daemonic gifts and powers. WEAKNESSES: Chaos suffers the same high point cost as Space Marines. Daemons are powerful but vulnerable. Chaos also lacks hi-tech items like Land Speeders and Jump Packs to get into combat quickly.
GENERAL TACTICS: Move to hand-to-hand or close range and then let loose the daemons of war. Don't skirmish with troops that move faster than you, like Ork buggies and Eldars, because they'll pick you apart.

## TYRANIDS

STRENGTHS: The Tyranids are a completely bio-organic army. When they need something, they grow it. These armies
are masters of close combat and possess extreme speed, allowing them to move about the battlefield at will.
WEAKNESSES: Tyranids are poor at ranged attacks. Their strong dependence on the leadership of Tyranid Warriors and the Hive Tyrant is also a problem; if these leaders are all killed, a Tyranid army will probably fall apart.
CENERAL TACTICS: Charge! Most of the Tyranid army needs to be in close combat to do anything. Tyranid armies need to combine their great speed with available cover to get themselves into close combat with the enemy before they're shot to pieces.

## ON THE FIELD

So, now that you have a grasp on the different armies, the big question is what to do with them on the battlefield. Here are a few basic fighting styles common to Worhommer 40K games:
THE DEVASTATOR. Using heavy weapons, tanks, dreadnoughts, etc., pound your opponent into submission with a withering hail of punishing firepower. This is the preferred tactic of the Imperial Guardsmen.
THE ASSAULT: With superior hand-to-hand ability or a massive swarm of troops, carve through the enemy line. This style involves an all-out charge into hand-to-hand combat. Tyranids like this one.
THE FAST ATTACK: Using fast-moving and hard-hitting troops, come in quickly, deliver a lethal blow and then retreat before enemy troops can react. Repeat as necessary. The Eldar excel at this tactic. THE FIREFICHT Send in "basic" troopers and dish out as much low-strength firepower as possible to wear down a superior enemy. Even against a Devastator force, such an army can often carry the battle. Accuracy is important for this tactic, making it an ideal mission for the Space Marines.
THE HORDE: Using the cheapest armies possible, build a huge army of little peons who can swarm the battlefield and overwhelm the enemy. Accuracy is not nearly as important as playing the odds; 100 terrible soldiers will usually do more damage in the long run than 10 elite troops. Orks excel at this tactic.

Though each army type has a tactic that most effectively utilizes its strengths, be prepared to change tactics to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves on the battlefield. If you stick to the same tactics every outing, you'll become predictable.

During the game, watch out for units that are "counters" to yours. Heavy weapon troopers are great at shooting at enemy troops across the battlefield, but they tend to get shredded in hand-to-hand combat. There is always an enemy out there you can't defeat. Look out for them.

Maneuvering plays a big role in Worhammer 40K. If you're facing a force you can't handle, find good cover or run away. On the other hand, if you see an enemy unit wandering around

Let's take a look at a well-rounded 1,000 point Ork army. You can assemtle this army using many of the miniatures that come in the Warhammer 40,000 8ox Game. Presented by Zoggit, Gretchen seribe.

## WAAA-HUME-SHASHA ARMY

Characters (270 pelrit tetal):

- Warboss Dadtreff Humbesmasha. Mega-Armor, Plasma Gun, Powerfist. ( 106 points)
"e's a tough one, Hemie-Smasha. Knock yer zoggin' 'ead off."
- Bighoss Zogtaca Flak Armor, Bolt Pistol, Nustom Shoota. (55 points)
"Da boss's bestest mate. Wif a big, big gun."
- Mokandil Twistit. Fiak Armor, Bolt Pistol, Shokk Attack Gun; six stands of Snotling "Amme." (T3 points)
${ }^{\text {"Fwistrit is da }}$ fixa when da boyz break stuff. 'e's also 'andy wif dat gun...."
- Buntherd Ereholdts. Flak Armor, Bolt Plstol, (18 points)
"Ba meanest greenest Runtherda in da whole Waaaa..."
- Palahoy Snippaz Flak Armor, Bolt Pistol. (18 points)
"Bartiess, evil, cruel git...but comz cheap!"


## Squads (4050 polint trota):

- Nobz Moh. Five Nohz, with 'Eavy Armor, Bolterss, Chainswords. ( 125 points)
"Da Tuff gitz. Dey leadz da way across da fiefd..." - Bad Moonz Mob, 10 Bad Moon Boyz, Flak Armor,
 Bolters; two with
LasKannors. ( 190 points)
"Da Rich Gitz. Bey iz lazy; day sit back an' shoot, An' shoot. An' shoot."
- Goff Boyz Mobs 15 Goff SharBoyz. Flak Armor, Bolt Pistol, Axe. (195 points)
"Da Wean Bitz. All dey do is 'WAABGN', and 'CHARGE!""
- Eretchin Mob One: 19 Gretchin. Flak Armor, Autogun, Knife. (95 points)
"Ja Rumnerz. Brave gitz. Dey get shot at."
Support ( 230 point tatal):
- Dreadnought. with $2 \times$ Powerclaws, ix Lascannon, $1 x$ Heavy Bolter.
( 145 points)
"Dis iz Sammie. Sammie is ded 'ard, and ded shooty."
- Two Warhusgies. Twin Linked Heavy Bolters, ( 45 points $\times 2$ )
"Dey iz da Danger Boyz. "Danger,' 'cuz you bost not get too close..."
that can't counter your tactics, swoop in and engage it. If your besieged unit is being overwhelmed by a horde army, try to inflict enough casualties to induce your enemy to break and run. If you're lucky, they won't come back. It is almost always easier to break the bad guys than to kill all of them.

Since Warhammer 40 K is generally played with only two players and no referee, when a situation not covered in the rules arises, it's up to you to interpret the rules. Given that it is a competitive game, it isn't always easy to step back and view things objectively. If the debate starts to get heated and bog down play, do this: Note the problem, agree to work it out after the game and then flip a coin to see which player gets to make the call for that particular session. After you've finished, sit down with the rules and work out the disagreement; you can always cook up a house rule if the rules are silent on the point of contention. Warhammer 40K is the sort of game that attracts house rules like big gunz attract Orks; there are probably as many house rules out there as there are players.

Robert Allen, though on all-around nice guy, is not above shameless plugs. Check out his column "Small Talk" at www.rpg.net.

 cleverly played, a combination of two or more cards can provide you with exactly this kind of massive power. Never doubt that a good combination of cards is more powerful than the sum of its parts.

Consider the cards Brass Man and Veteran's Voice. The Brass Man can untap during your upkeep for one mana, and Veteran's Voice lets you tap the enchanted creature to give another creature $+2 /+1$. On their own, neither of these cards are likely to win many matches, but when combined they become a nigh-omnipotent creaturepumping engine.

Building a Magic deck is kind of like cooking. By itself, flour isn't all that appetizing. But add some sugar and eggs and you can make some tasty cookies. Mmm. Cookies. Likewise, when it comes to combos, some cards are the ultimate building blocks. Mix in the right ingredients and you can serve up a plate of ass-whoopin'.

Now that we've whet your appetite for annihilation, here's a look at the eight best combo carcts of all time- the card's that promise to create the most potent combinations possible. We've also included a shopping list of prime ingredients to whip up killer combos, 'cause in Magic there's nothing sweeter than the taste of victory.

## b. heins of Power

WHY IT'S SUNO: Any time you can take control of one of your opponent's creatures, it's nice if there's a chance you can do something destructive with it. Swarming in to attack your opponent with his own creature always has poetic appeal, but it's even better if you can off the creature in the process. Like a Ray of Command on steroids, Reins of Power does the first part for you, grabbing the reins of all of your opponent's creatures-it's up to you to find something to do with them.

Fortunately, there are quite a few cards that let you dump creatures. The best is probably Goblin Bombardment; it costs nothing to use and you can sacrifice your opponent's creatures en masse. Ashnod's Altar lets you tum your opponent's critters into mana, useful for powering a big spell if he has a swarm of creatures. With Mogg infestation, you can blow away all of your opponent's creatures, giving yourself twice as many in the process.

Another option is to reap the benefits of one of your own creatures by giving it to your opponent for a turn. Does your opponent refuse to play land to pump up your Dirtcowl Wurm? Give it to him for a turn and play the land yourself. Or try wreaking havoc on your opponent by passing him a creature with a heinous upkeep cost, like the Demonic Hordes, during his upkeep. PRME MGREDIETIS: Ashnod's Altar, Demonic Mordes, Dirtcowl Wurm, Goblin Bombardment, Mogg Infestation.




# 7. 



Tap to make another creature $0 / 2$ until end of turn. Treat this exactly as if the numbers in the lower right of the target card were $0 / 2$. All special characteristics and enchantments on the creature are unaffected.

WHY IT'S 60DE: A Sorceress Queen is what you get when a Prodigal Sorcerer dresses in drag. Either that, or a creature with a particularly powerful effect on combat. Alone, the Queen can negate the attack of any one creature-after all, what's a $0 / 2$ creature going to do to you? Gnaw on your shins? More importantly, $0 / 2$ creatures are easy to kill.

The ultimate zero-power slayer is the Dwarven Thaumaturgist, who can saddle the prey of the Sorceress Queen with a toughness of zero. Transmutation works just as effectively, and can catch your opponent by surprise. Dealing two points of damage to the weakened critter with an Orcish Artillery also does the job nicely, as does giving it $+3 /-2$ with the Minion of Tevesh Szat. Another option is to force a creature to attack with a Norritt, cut it down to size with the Queen, and knock it off with whoever's handy - a Sengir Vampire is always ready for a snack.
PAME MGAEDIEWTS: Dwarven Thaumaturgist, Minion of Tevesh Szat, Norritt, Orcish Artillery, Transmutation.

[^3]
#  

 6. Spirit LinkWHY IIS GUII: Spirit Link is one of the most powerful reusable life-gaıners in Magic. Stick it on your biggest critter and, whether it blocks or attacks, the life-points start rolling in. Maximizing this life-gaining ability is the key to abusing this card.

Spirit Link works double-duty when you use it on a "pay-my-upkeep-or-else" creature. A Force of Nature will be powerless against you if you decide to stiff him his upkeep snack, plus you get the normal life bonus when Swamp Thing (or Leaf Thing if you're using 5th Edition) stomps through combat. You can also use Spirit Link to abuse the power of direct damage-dealing creatures. A Spirit Linked Orcish Artillery will net you two points of life for every two points of hurt it dishes out. If there are enough creatures on the table, a Spirit Linked Crypt Rats or Ifh-Biff Efreet will earn you dozens of life for just a few mana.

Spirt Link's low casting cost means you can toss it in any deck with even a small splash of white, so stick it in that deck that just needs a little extra life-gaining. Or, use it with other life-gaining cards and build up an unscalable wall of life.
Paimf IMAREMEHTS: Banshee, Crypt Rats, Force of Nature, Ifh-Biff





## 5. Fire Whip

WIT IT'S S8A8: Fire Whip is an excellent way to get use out of those early-game weenie creatures-a Llanowar Elf in the mana-sich late-game environment is pretty useless, but you can give him a new lease on life as a Prodigal Sorcerer. But why is Fire Whip an awesome combo card? Because it does something no other card does: It grants a creature the ability to deal damage to a player, as opposed to an enchantment dealing the damage itself.

This means you can use all those creature abilities that activate whenever a creature damages an opponent, without having to attack, For instance, put a Fire Whip in the clawed hands of Nicol Bolas. In addition to being hit for one point of damage each turn, your opponent will also lose his entire hand!

If you equip a Marsh Viper with a Fire Whip, your opponent gets poisoned to death in a mere five pings. In a game with several players, The Fallen wielding a Fire Whip should put you ahead of the pack. Fire Whip can be the center of a deck devoted to this type of combination, but it's just as easy to blend a handful of these combos into a deck with another theme, doubling the power of the deck.
PaIME MEAFDIENTS: Lowland Basilisk, Marsh Viper, Nicol Bolas, Sengir Vampire, The Fallen.

[^4]
## 4. Breeding pit

WHY IT'S GUAIS: The Breeding Pit was one of Dommara's first fast food joints. For just a coupte of mana down, you get a Thrull McNugget each turn. These McThrull tokens are great as basic cannon fodder, and they pile up quickly unless your opponent neglects his defense in favor of beating down the Thrull population. Plus, if you slap a couple of Bad Moons on the table, your flock of sacrificial lambs becomes a horde of bloodthirsty beasts, ready to make fodder out of your opponent.

The real beauty of the Breeding Pit, and other creature generators like it, is that you can take advantage of creature sacrificing effects without blowing a summon card each time. Instead of frantically depleting your hand to keep the Lord of the Pit sated, you can rely on a steady supply of fresh meat from the Breeding Pit. Why waste your better creatures on a Skull Catapult when you can decimate your opponent's forces with a downpour of Thrull corpses?

With so many uses, Breeding Pit can be the central card in a number of decks, with "horde" decks and "big-black-monsters-that-like-to-munck-on-other-critters" decks being the most popular.
PRIMF IWERFDJFWIS: Bad Moon, Fallen Angel, Lord of the Pit, Mob Justice, Stronghold Assassin.



## 3. Balance

WHY If's c0A8: Balance is the ultimate "reset button," bringing everyone down to the same level. This makes it the cure-all for slow starts. Evening things out is all well and good, but the real key is using it in combos, where a well-timed Balance can give you a decided advantage. And the combos are many.

Try stashing your critters in Cold Storage or Safe Haven before dropping the bomb for an instant creature advantage afterward. Sacritice your land to a Zuran Orb in response to casting Batance and you get a massive life-point injection while everyone else just gets hosed. Mishra's Factories and Jade Statues also work well, since you can play the Balance when they don't count as creatures, leaving your opponent out in the cold and you ready for action. Another good time to Balance is after attacking with a Teler's Veil in play. While your creatures are stowed safely away in phased-out land, your opponent's critters are screwed.

And don't forget that Balance can be used to force your opponent to discard as well. With five cards in hand, try casting a Mrnd Bomb-while your opponent agonizes over how much damage to take, just discard ail of your cards except the Balance Then play the Balance to flush your opponent's hand.
PAMMF IMGAEDIFHIS: Cold Storage, Mind Bomb, Mishra's Factory, Teferi's Veil, Zuran Orb.

[^5]WHII IP'S SOBS: Dominaria's wintry Içe Age brought us more than jaya Ballard and the Kjeldoran Skyknights; also rising from the snowy depths was the one card that has spawned more infinite loops than any other: Enduring Renewal. Even on its own, Enduring Renewal is a powerful game-changer, making the minions you already have on the table effectively immortal. What's more, the penalty that newly-drawn critters fly straight to the boneyard is easily circumvented with a friendly Hell's Caretaker or a Miraculous Recovery or two.

Enduring Renewal's real power, as alluded to before, is its ability to create infinite loops. Take, for instance, a Fallen Angel and any zero-cost critter and bingol Infinitely huge Angel. Addıtionally, since Renewal states that creatures hit the graveyard before going back to your hand, a Soul Net will dredge up as much life as you have mana to dump on it.

Combine Enduring Renewal with Aluren and you can churn out cheap creatures for free. As long as your creatures have a casting cost of three or less, they'll be practically immortal. Add a self-sacrificing creature like Mogg Fanatic, Blood Pet or Bottle Gnomes to the combo and you've got a potent infinite loop. FRIME JMFREOENTS: Aluren, Ashnod's Altar, Hell's Caretaker, Mogg Fanatic, any Spike.




1. Icy Manipulator

WHY IT'S AOIA: The lcy Manipulator is a sort of "Swiss Army card," a useful addition to virtually any deck. The most basic use is as an inexpensive means of shutting down one of your opponent's toys, be it that unblockable attacker or that annoying Maze of fth.

More significantly, the lcy lets you take advantage of the rule regarding tapped artifacts-specifically, that a tapped artifact doesn't generate any effects. With the simple tap of an lcy, you can deprive your opponent of the benefits of your Howling Mine or laugh as your opponent's Black Vise sits impotently tapped until you destroy it at your leisure.

Then there's the famous Nettling Imp trick. Tap an opposing beastie, force it to attack with the Imp and then watch it perish as it sputters like a flipped-over turtle. The trick works just as well with a Royal Assassin, giving him a prime target for stabbing. FRIME FWCREDIENTP: Howling Mine, Netting Imp, Royal Assassin, Sands of Time, Winter Orb.
2. You may tap any land, creature, or artifact in play on either side. No effects are generated by the target card.


Jeremy Schichor fancies himself quite the chef. He's particularly fond of his latest recipe-Ouphe-berry Pie.


# How to send your RPG on a roadtrip through the cenfuries by danjoyce 

> he death knight advances. Your paladin, stumbling backwards in his armor, draws his laser pistol and starts firing. Fighting the shimmying controls, your starpilot crashes his ship through the spires of the Bastille, skidding to a halt on Paris" cobblestone Rue de Cuerre. You've era-skipped four hundred years to 1789, smack-dab into the middle of the French Revolution.

Past? Future? With time travel, it doesn't matter; your campaign possibilities are endless.

Time's grand framework is a firstclass campargn seed. It opens the door to just about anything you want: cyborg assassins from the future, Victorian inventors traveling to the twilight of humanity, dinosaur hunts in the distant past. You and your players need never be bored again. But-and it's a big "but"time travel is also a Pandora's Box full of paradoxes waiting to bite your campaign in the ass.

Here's one: You give your players the keys to Doctor Who's TARDIS, and the first trip they make, your group's gun-nut accidentally blows away his own grandfather. Ergo, the gun-nut's father was never born, and neither was the gun-nut, so he couldn't have gone back in time in the first place. Unless you're doublemajoring in philosophy and physics, you might scratch your head over this one.

Have no fear; inQuest is here to help. is changing the past logically impossible? Probably. But don't worry about it; while it's a true scientific fact, it's also dull. If you want to run time travel adventures, forget about the paradoxes. We don't want you to hurt your brain.

Keeping that in mind, here are five theorres of time with which you can have a bit more fun...

## theory \#ls fixed history

Time runs on ralls; you can't change recorded history. This isn't as bad as it sounds. The leeway you have is that much of history isn't recorded, and the player characters (PCs) can get
away with filling in those factual gaps in the knowledge of historians; the players" actions are what "actually happened" at the time. Your PCs can even be the agents that make key events happen. For instance, the PCs could suggest to Ulysses during his siege of Troy that he might build a wooden horse. Don't worry that this creates a time loop with no clear beginning or end; everything will still make a kind of sense.

The problem you face is that you will have to fudge things occasionally. If the PCs could travel back to the first century and try to stop Nero from burning down Rome, somehow or other the attack will fail. They'll get discovered by Nero's guards or the gun will misfire. Be subtle. The players should not know they're in a world with an unchangeable past.

This kind of time theory is well suited for occasional hops to the past, but doesn't work well for regular time travelers; the players will realize what's going on and feel powerless.

Ersmple: Players from the future are on the trail of a body-swapping sorcerer who travels back to Dallas, 1963. The players meet a drunken bum who claims to be JFK, who will subsequently be arrested and hung for an earlier murder. Meanwhite, the sorcerer, in Kennedy's body, will be coming down Dealy Plaza the next day. The police have everywhere cov-ered-except for that grassy knoll, over there...

Either, the players shoot from there and get away, or someone else will. Your options are open because history doesn't record who, if anyone, shot from the grassy knoil.
theorg ${ }^{2}$ 2ralastic history You can change the past, but history will "snap back" into a similar pattern. For instance, if you kill Stalin, another Russian with a similar background will take his place and do many of the same things. Major events can't be derailed, only altered.

Minor changes will work through to the future. What constitutes a minor or major change is up to you. Here's an example of a minor change: A PC who kills his ancestor discovers, on returning to his present, that he now has a completely different set of ancestors and, from the point of view of everybody else, a new identity. He is still a Victorian inventor, but he lives in a different house and has a different name.

The PCs can retroactively change history for everyone eise. They will retain their memories of events which-now, after the changenever happened. Assuming the PCs aren't the only people who can travel in time, you'll need some justification for why history isn't contintally being revised in minor ways. Presumably someone who is immune to having their memory altered is fighting to maintain the status quo. In Feng Shui, it's the various factions in the Secret War. It could be time cops, Time Lords, whatever. This is even more important for the next theory, fragile history.

Elastic history is fine for a timehopping campaign, but works better in combination with fragile history, that is, history is basically elastic, but has a breaking point if a unique condition is met.

Exampie: Let's say, in a superhero game, three heroes are blown away


Go ahead and napalm your knights. Anything goes in time-fravel-based RPGs.
by Dr. Megatonne; the fourth, an inventor called Omega, escapes and subsequently invents a time travel device. Omega travels back to the fight with a howitzer aiming to "surprise" Dr. Megatonre and save his friends. Alas, the three heroes do a double-take when the newer Omega appears and Dr. Megatonne wastes them in the confusion. "Omega: Whose S de Are You On?" reads the newspaper headline when Omega returns to his own time. He's changed things a little, but that's all.

## theory \#3: fragile history

Any change in history will completely derail the future. If the PCs kill Hitler, World War II doesn't happen. What happens next is up to you. Possibly Stalin takes Poland, then advances across Europe. Britain, Germany and the United States ally against Russia, causing the fall of communism in the 1940s, but resulting in the Federal States of Russia and East Asia arising as the premier superpower in the 1980s.

Since events snowball rapidly, don't make the trigger for change too sensitive unless you want to keep track of, for example, every cigarette butt the players drop in the past. Let the PCs get away with anything that doesn't contradict recorded history.

Most players will assume they're operating under this theory of time travel; don't disillusion them, whichever theory you are using. It is, arguably, the most satisfying for them, but it's the most work for a gamemaster, especially in a time-hopping campaign.

Example: The PCs have a blank slate. Their actions in the past are as unlimited as their actions in their own present. If
they save the life of Julius Caesar, they might unwittingly prevent the fall of the Roman Empire. In fact, the empire might continue up to the players' present: a stagnant, slave-based society with only minor technological advances. Everything the PCs ever knew will be gone. Ooops.

## theory *4: parallel timelines

You can't change the past, but you can jump to a parallel world. So when the PCs travel back in time, they appear in a parallel timeline where the present corresponds in some way to the events of the PCs' own timeline.

The new timeline could be exactly the same as the one in the PCs' past up until the point they enter it. At that point everything will diverge from the history they know. So if a villain goes back in time and kills Abraham Lincoln, he really will kill him in the new timeline, splitting the United States into two warring nations in only that timeline. In the villain's own timeline, however, nothing will change-except the viliain disappears.

Another possibility is that the PCs travel to what is an "alternate world" timeline already. For instance, the PCs might appear in a world where Germany and Japan won World War II, where the social roles of men and women are reversed or where dinosaurs didn't die.

This theory is great for a wide-ranging campaign, as you can send the players anywhere. A minor problem is that the players may feel cheated; they can't change things where they really counti.e., in their own timeline.

Erample: The PCs step back a decade into their past, where they meet younger
versions of themselves. They may want to give advice to their doubles so they don't make the same mistakes the PCs made, but maybe the doubles aren't that happy to see them.

## theory \#5: the unknown

You don't have to use any of these theories of time travel, of course. You could invent your own. For instance, maybe history is fixed and if you do anything that contradicts it, you immediately get returned to your own era. Or maybe you can only spend a set amount of time anywhen that's not your present-say 60 minutes-before reality snaps you back to your own era?

Maybe you can only travel mentally within your own lifetime; you can travel backwards or forwards and do things differently, but you can never be in two places at once or travel outside your own lifetime.

After you've got your theory straight, be sure to run through a few possible seenarios in your head before the players make their first trip.

Bhanale: Time travel lets a reality-altering "chaos" seep into the world, warping those who travel in time or warping their arrival/departure points. PCs themselves could be changed; upon each return to the present, their belongings take on elements of the time periods they've visited. Or maybe a trip to the past introduces this "chaos element" and changes start to spread. How can the PCs fix the past when every time they go back, more chaos is introduced?

## there and back

How the PCs travel in time isn't that important. For the sake of a story, players can swallow any scientific or magical gobbledygook: rifts in space, a Victorian machine, a blue police telephone box, a high-level magic-user spell. All are fine.

The main criteria is that time travel should be difficult. Otherwise, everyone would be doing it. In a sci-fi game, a time-travel device would be highly guarded. in a fantasy scenario, the spell might require exotic components to cast and only be known to a small number of sorcerers. If there are time holes in space, there should be few accurate maps of them.

A secondary criteria is that time travel involves some kind of special effect. Characters should arrive surrounded in a nimbus of electricity, throwing up their breakfast or spend an instant surrounded by the screams of lost souls who have
been erased from time-anything to remind them that it's not like merely walking out the door.

Most importantly, you should ensure that the means to travel in time stays in your control, not the players'. If they possess the device themselves, make it unreliable. Or have a non-player character (NPC) use the device on them. This might seem totally arbitrary and unfair. It is; however, it is also necessary. If you don't agree, wait until five duplicates of your party's gun-nut are hunting tyrannosaurs on an evening when you'd prepared a scenario about smuggling on the Thames in 18th century London.

## character translation

When characters from one era arrive in another, it's simplest if they just appear the way they left. A wizard arriving in the 20th centery in a business suit stretches credibility in a way that a wizard arriving in his own robe doesn't.

This isn't to say you can't impose some conditions. In "The Terminator," only living material can travel in time. Or you could have only the minds of the characters travel in time, as in the TV series "Quantum Leap." So if your Victorian PCs travel back to the Iron Age, they arrive in the bodies of, for example, Celtic warriors. You'd then need to generate new physical stats but not mental stats or skills.

Game statistics and rules are otherwise not a problem. If you play GURPS or the Hero system, you're laughing; they'll fit any period. But even if you play a game that's tied to one genre like $A D \& D$, creating damage ratings for 20th century guns and so forth should be straightforward. Don't feel obliged to switch game systems; your players will only be confused by the abilities of their new characters. Make the new world come to them.

Time travelers in the past are rarely a problem. Physics, like logic, should work in any world. Your space age mercs will have their lasers until the batteries run down.

Magic is trickier. What if your $A D \& D$ mage comes to the present day? Feng Shui answers this problem by giving its different junctures different ambient magic levels, making magic easier or harder to use-easy in A.D. 71, hard in A.D. 1998. If you like the idea, you could rule that an $A D \& D$ mage's spells take 10 times longer to cast or have a chance of failure in the 20th century. If not, go with what makes you comfortable.

Language difficulties in time travel adventures are a drag. Make sure one of your PCs has a universal translator, a "comprehend languages" spell or a phrase book. Or let them learn the new language in nothing flat, like H.G. Wells' time traveler. They're here to adventure, not mime.


Check your power armor before time worping back to $150,000,000$ B.C.

## Aler's 0 Hat

## Top 5 time setkings for your campaigns

## 1. 50,001000 C <br> - (The Jurassir Age)

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## 2. 1.1250

## (The Mindle Ages)

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## (Renaissence Enyland) <br> Time Theory Fixed.

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### 4.400 104?

## (20ih Centry Banletiw).

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(Post Apocolypse)
Time Theorys the (flosen
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 thefore ix's sol late?


What happens when a medieval priest runs into a futuristic robot? We'll close our eyes.

## paradox problems

The point of time travel is to open new areas for your players to explore, not to revise what they did yesterday over and over again. Keep the following in mind:

Few jumps. Occasional big jumps are better than frequent little jumps. You can enforce this by not letting the PCs keep a reliabie time travel device or by making only certain dates "open" to time travel. Maybe the "essential swirliness" of the time continuum means that there are only a dozen different dates to which they can travel. Or you could rule arbitrarily that only one version of a person can be in one place at any one time; any others will be D.O.A. If you do allow more than one version of a PC to exist, give the player control only over the most "recent" version. Earlier versions should be NPCS controlled by you; this can lead to interesting situations.

Historical knowledge. Knowledge, or lack of it, is another hurdie. Most of us have a grasp of pseudo-medieval Europe, but what about Elizabethan England or South America in the 1700s? Sourcebooks will help but they're difficult to manage if your players suddenly turn up where you least expected. Unless you improvise well, they should travel somewhere only when you're ready for them to go there, so you can prepare the ground ahead of time.

I've assumed you'll use Earth for time traveling. This Isn't necessary, but its detailed history makes it so much easier if you do. If you don't, elther write a detailed history for your own campaign - and let the players see at least some of it-or prck a world that already has a detailed background; Traveller's universe would work, as would Glorantha's or MERP's. If your players don't have a grasp of your world's history, time traveling will bomb.

Erasure. A big problem when you're

GMing with a fragile history or a parallel reality timeline is that you'll continually be erasing all your hard work. Your campaign gets rubbed out each time. All those NPCs you lovingly detailed never existed.

You can get around this in a way that's still satisfying for the players by using this theory: The soul is immutable. People's histories can be changed, but their souls, their personalities, stay the same. So the same NPCs exist in different circumstances, with different memories.

Let's say, in a fragile timeline, superheroic PCs return to their present to find they've accidentally allowed Japan to win World War II. Their archenemy Dr. Megatonne never existed, but a similar miscreant with the same traits currently does. Only now, this "new" villain is the commander of a POW camp, where all captured resistance fighters are sent.

The PCs-they discover from "old friends" who know them by other names-mare such resistance fighters...

## time's up

Time travel offers some interesting philosophical paradoxes, but while these may work well in novels or in the smoke-filled rooms of student discussion groups, they usually suck wind in a game situation. The whole point is to take your players somewhere interesting and new, not just to whisk them out of the dungeon and into a confused argument. Your campaign might be sophisticated, but don't lose sight of the fact that roleplaying is about having fun, not crunching logic.

So what are you waiting for? The history of the universe is at your fingertips. It's about time you get started...

Dan foyce wishes he had the keys to Dr. Who's TARDIS, so he could throw them owoy.

By Rick Swan and the InQuest staff. Artwork by Brian Douglas Ahern.

Grade $A$ stinkers abound in the world of gaming. We named more than a dozen in last year's "Games That Suck" article (InQuest \#29). But it's not enough to just name 'em; we want to stop them: stamp 'em out before they ever get made. So, as a preemptive strike, we compiled a list of games that should never be made. Ever. Games that would stink so bad they'd peel the paint,
scorch the wallpaper and send buyers fleeing for the hills. So join us as we look at some of these losers. We'll peek at the pathetic premise, the would-be audience (Its Only Chance), possible expansions (The Franchise) and the ultimate reason for the game's demise (The Worst Part). You may want to get a clothespin to protect those delicate nasal passages before reading further.


## Sosame Street inf

Premtsea To get a piece of that high-spending young audience, White Wolf decides it needs to license a big property. But all the good one's have been taken, except... "Sesame Street." In this chilling RPG, titled Oscar: The Grouching, you assume the role of a pissed-off puppet. With disciplines like Alphabetautogy, Countecism and a key stat based on how much room your character has to accommodate a hand up its butt, characters struggle to find their place in the Goth-Pup world. Gradually they become Dark Muppets, also known as Mupperou. As their fiery world, known as ChiTeWo, closes in on them, the Mupperou each confront their greatest horror: "Evil" Emie faces the rubber ducky from hell; Bertferatu must face The Count for leadership of the clan; Cookie Monster is stalked by a garlic macaroon. Mupperou advance through the Traditions, passing from the Masquerade to the Progeny until they at last become the Stuffed, a state which can only be attained through regular sustenance in the Binky Pool.

Its Only Chances TV stations start intercutting "Sesame Street" with horror movies, introducing characters like Fozzie Krueger, Norman "Big Bırd" Bates and Tickle-Me Jason.

The Franchise: Significant crossover potential with other children's shows. New characters could include Assamite Sam, Ravnos Runner and Brujah Bunny.

The Worgt Parts When exposed to the fiery pits of the underworld, Mupperou tend to ignite. Every sourcebook is sponsored by the numbers 6,6 and 6 and the letters $d, i$ and $e$.

## Moby Pict rap

Premise; The gamemaster plays the whale, known as ef grande Moby in the Spanish version. The players, as the captain and crew, are rated for Endurance, Stamina, Endurance and Disguise Self as Carp. The typical game-actually, every game-revolves around the captain and crew roaming the ocean, looking for whale, not finding whale, going home. A "Swab the Decks" sequence occurs between games where the captain earns experience points for (1) giving inspirational speeches about whale obsession and (2) buffing his leg. The crew earns them for (1) staying awake and (2) not giggling. The game really comes alive roughly two percent of the time when you get to roll a "thar she blows" encounter. The crew then gets to launch toothpick harpoons at the GM, while he simulates whale spray by filling up his mouth with Dr. Pepper and popping his cheeks.

Its Oniy Chamoer Game is declared a classic and kids are forced to play it in school.

The Franchisen James Cameron makes game into an epic film, West End gets rights to RPG based on the film (but releases no supporting materials), Wildstorm Studios makes a Dickblade comic based on a Wizards of the Coast CCG. Action figures follow...

The Worst Parte Keeping Ahab's wooden leg away from beavers.


## Splce cirls कलG

Premise: Colorful deck includes multiple images of Sporty, Baby, Scary, Muggy and Loopy, plus two auxiliary members, Stinky and Bloaty. Each card contains only one number for "Cirl Power," either one, two or, uh, two. To play, deal out six cards, then take 15 minutes to arrange them right-side-up in hand. If successful, players then attempt to add up "Girl Power" ratings-whoever scores highest, wins. Weeee! Advanced game involves the spice Girl Challenge, where players lay cards on the table and shout "girl powerl" along with the card's value. After players have placed their cards, they roll dice to see who wins.

Its Only Ohances Collectors will want to acquire entire set that, when assembled, shows a life-sized reproduction of Baby Spice's butt. Hardcore fans will want to confirm the rumor that the deck contains a nude photo of Stinky. Manufacturer, however, will deny everything.

The Franchise: Expansion decks introduce additional power cards like three's and four's. Whoever currently owns OverPower will claim game violates their patented play methods, ending franchise.

Fhe Worst Part: Trying to figure out how many is six.


## INingon Sorabble

Premiser Players decide who goes first after particıpating in the Sacred Right of Kar'qap Uulon, where opponents hold each other to the floor and stuff tiles down each other's throats. This continues until somebody barfs, at which point his family is admitted into the High Council and the Scrabble game can get underway. First player screams the warrior's cry, hacks up tiles înto a bucket. While they're floating around like alphabet soup, he forms words. Every word counts. "Klaataka," "bihq" and "q'aapla" are all legal, making for an interesting but lengthy game. Victory goes to whoever wins Martâak Fun'gan's Showdown of Honor, in which players use the game pieces as weapons. Double points are scored for landing blows to the head with the game board. Pulting an eye out with a $Q$, $X$ or $Z$ tile ranks as a Triple Wound Score.


## Brady Bumch risc

Promisea Players assume the roll of one member of the cast (Mom, Dad, Alice, Greg, Peter, Bobby, Marsha, Jan, Cindy, Bloaty, Stinky), with statistics determined for Attractiveness, intellect and Acting Like a Dork. Each PC competes for victory points by completing a specific task. For example, boisterous Peter must date the girl of his dreams; determined Greg must nail Mom; loyal Dad must nail Bobby; fun-loving lan, must subject Marsha to painful lingering torture. Bonus points are awarded to any cast member who successfully exposes quest star Keith Partridge as a woman.

Its Only Chance: A surprising number of potential buyers are still hot for Alice.

The Franchise: Campaign modules include A Very Brady Amputation and The Brady Girls Get Neutered.

The Worst Parts Players must begin each game by singing the theme song while forming letters with their bodies like The Village People.


## Jewn Springer Bhe

Premise: Players begin by rolling on three charts to determine type of guest they'il be portraying: 1. General Category (Angry Men... Transsexual Children. . Bi-Racial Cyber Sluts...) 2. Forbidden Activity (Who Are Attracted To... Who Want To Beat Up... Who Want To Urınate On...)


3 Innocent Victims (Wrongly Imprisoned Felons .. Women Who Once Were Men... Bigamist Corpses...) Stats are then rolied up for Charisma, Fast Talk and Expertise With Folding Chair. Gamemaster assumes the role of Jerry Springer; PC quests argue and bicker until a fist fight breaks out or everyone feels compelled to take off their clothes.

## Tts Only Chance:

Game fans encompass surprising number of exhubitionists.

The Franchise:
Pregenerated adventures include I Married My Split Personality, Marilyn Manson's Baby is My Eye Doctor and Cross-Dres. sing Hamsters in the KKK.

The Worst Part:
Getting ass kicked by Ricki Lake RPG.


## Deep Space 

Premise: in the far-flung future, on the eage of known space, a band of intrepid entrepreneurs have established an intergalactic convenience store known as Deep Space 7 Eleven. You begin by rolling up an alien (Vulcan, Romulan, Blue Guy With Antler Thingies) and the basic skills (Pilot Spacecraft, Aim Phaser, Operate Weenie Machine). Then, as one of the entrepreneurs, it's your job to transform this struggling enterprise into a thriving money machine, and it won't be easy. Not because of threats of war, not because of hostile extraterrestrials, but because, well, there isn't that much business out there in the middle of nowhere, you dope. Between long stretches of sitting around, you'll bargain with wily Klingons over the price of Lucky Strikes, comfort distraught Romulans over losing Power Ball tickets and thwart underage Ferengi attempting to buy Bud Lite. But mostly, you sit around.

Its Oniy Chance: Fair number of players with Buicksized butts.

The Franchise: Finely detailed miniatures add touch of realism, such as Vulcan Ambassador Sipping Slurpee and Romulan General With Twinkie.

Whe Worst Part Time spent unclogging Cheetostuffed transporters.

Rick Swan and the inQuest Staff were official sphere moisteners for the Klingon spitball team.

## CONTEST

Wizards of the Coas


IHExdus" the newest Magic: Mo Prutienif expansion, the crew of the Weatherighit is trying to get out of the dark plane of Math. But, like many Madic aficionados, they took time out to read multege

Jnfortunately, they sut sin fiti neailigs this issue they amtiraly sid
 to your to locate the missing, fren members betore the portalc coses. How? Just find the mateling Ilistinapis of Gerrard) ciplt Stsay Squee and Tahingarth and white tow what page you found yin in It as easy as pulling a sliver out of a Mosgs paw. So get searchitn', Sparkik!

## GRIND PRATAE(1):

Ome lucky mana top banana will win a complete set of the Rath Cycle (Weatheright", the prequel to the Rath Cycle; Tempest "; Stronghold ${ }^{*}$ and Exodus), plus a complete four-issue set of the new Magic: The Gathering comic book series from Dark Horse Comics, Gerrand's Quest'.

## 

Five almost-as-lucky mana bananas will each win 10 Exodus booster packs, two random Exodus preconstructed decks and the complete set of Gerrard's Quest,

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Ten others will split with flve Exodus booster packs, one random Exodus preconstructed deck and a complete set of Gerrord's Quest.

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Fill out the entry form and put it in an envelape. Send to. "Get Outta Ruthi"" Exodus Contest,
6/o Inquest, P.0. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Deadline is July 31, 1998.


NOESCAPE FROM THELAW












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 PO. Bax 118, Congers, 斯 18920.0118

## THRANURFOCHEST




# MAGIC STATUES 



## BABYLONINMINATYRI

When you'te fighting for the Third Age of Mankind, it's always good to know you have a warfleet or two in your pocket. Now that Agents of Garring is producing Bobylon 5 ship miniatures, you can have all the firepower you need for the licensed Bobylon 5 game or any other science-fiction miniatures game you may see fit to play. AOG has shipped over a dozen models, including fighters ("B5"'s familiar Star Fury, Narn Frazi, Centauri Sentri, Minbari Niał and Flyer, $\$ 6.95$ apiece in three-ship blister packs), warships (Earthforce Hyperion, \$8.95; Centauri Vorchan, \$6.95) and heavyweights like the Earthforce Omega Destroyer and Minbari Sharlin WarCruser ( $\$ 11.95$ each). At least eight more sculptures await Warner Brothers approval, and AOG has ambitious plans for dozens more, including every ship yet seen and the B5 and 84 stations.

AOG sells the miniatures unpainted, but you can ogle their snazzy paint jobs at www.agentsofgaming.com/bswmints.htm. Questions? E-mail aog@agentsofgamıng.com.


## MAP YOUR WAYHOME

If your best RPG mapping supplies up till now have consisted of crayons and colored paper, ProFantasy rides to your rescue with its software mapping program Campaign Cartographer 2 tied to its saddle. Now revved up for Windows $95 / \mathrm{NT}, \mathrm{CC} 2$ allows you to design floorplans and maps for fantasy, modern and science fiction settings. Use over 500 symbols for fantasy and contemporary maps, including heraldry, fonts and icons to bring your RPG maps to life. CC2 sells for $\$ 75.95$ plus shipping. Contact ProFantasy at 1 ( 800 ) $841-1487$ or on the Web at http://www.profantasy.com/profant for more details.

## VADER REVEALED

Darth Vader has been immortalized in an incredibly detailed life-sized bust by Mario Chiodo. The Darth Vader Reveal Maquette exactly duplicates the de-helmeted Anakin Skywalker as seen in the final moments of "Return of the ledi."

At $\$ 1,325$, it's no steal, but you sure get your money's worth. Anakın's scarred face is hand-finished latex. The 30 -inch sculpture, complete with satin cape, uses the same materials as the original movie costume. The shoulder pads and chest plate were modeled in fiberglass from original Lucasfilm molds, as was the
 detachable heimet on its separate display stand. The run is limited to 9,500 units.

Contact Illusive Originals at 1 (800) 258-1044, or for an up-close peak at Vader's head, visit Collectors Empire at www.collectorsempire. com/illusivereveal.htm

## FAMLLYFEUD

Ever since Antiquities, WotC has dropped dark hints about the ancient war waged by the brothers Urza and Mishra which destroyed Dominaria and caused the Ice Age. Jeff Grubb, longtime TSR staff designer and novelist, has laid bare the gory details of this conflict in the first of a new line of Magic novels from Wizards of the Coast. Trained as a civil engineer, Grubb fashioned Urza and Mishra's characters to dramatize the conffict between his own technical and artistic sides. To see which side of Grubb won, check your nearest bookstore for The Brothers War (\$5.99).

## DICEOTDARXNESS

Dice are hard to hype, but White Wolf gives it a go in the text on the box of new dice sets for their Vampire: The Dark Ages, Changeling, Mage and Trinity Ines (10 10-sided dice complete with color-coordinated carrying
 bag, each (or \$699) Ready' Here's the (hargating dice pitch: "Now you can bring unpredictability to your Changeling game. Chimerical and festive, these dice will take your game one step closer to the Dreaming. These dice are a necessity for any who would brave these dark times." Ball or strike? Who cares? They look cool. While the umpires are confersing, review the evidence at your local game store or www.white-woll.com.

## YOUR WHOLE LIFE ON A CARD

When the first abacus-style Magic life counters came out, players abandoned their glass beads and dice in droves. Only problem was that the new counters were dam heavy. Enter... UltraProl UltraPro, makers of Deck Protector card sleeves and DeckPro deck boxes (see "Treasure Chest" in $1 Q$ \#36) is producing licensed Mogic life-counter cards in
 sturdy plastic (\$2). Each card is illustrated with its picture from its Magic card: Hammer of Bogardan, Lotus Vale, Relentless Assault, Silver Queen, Meditate and Balduvian Horde. Make a flashy new fashion statement on the tourney floor with a color-coordinated deck, box and ife counter! This and other ingenious inventions can be seen at www.ultra-prostorage.com. We're still walting for licensed Atog underpants.

## LOVECRAFTATOZ

If you ever find yourself in a Cthulhu spelling bee, your only hope of survival is Chaosium's Encyclopedia Cthulhiana, compiled by Daniel Harm (\$14.95). Chaosium's second edition reference quide covers all things Cthulhu-from Abith to Zvilppoggua-with new thumbnail illustrations, a billionyear timeline, "A Brief History of the Cthulhu Mythos" and yet more Necronomical information. If you think you can handle all of this forbidden lore, seek out this 448-page tome at specialty bookstores, www.chaosium.com or e-matl chaosium@chaosium.com.


In Digital Extremes' Unreol, the alien prison starship Vortex Rikers crash lands on a hostile world where Skaarj warsiors have enslaved the mystic Nali High Priests. Armed with a flak cannon, razorjack and stinger, you fight your way through tarydium mines, Nal; ruins and a sky city-killing Krall hunders, bioengineered Brutes, and about 25 other icky races who get in your way. Yes, it's a 3-D shooter, but 24-bit color, detailed enemies, vast levels and easy multi-player setup have kept thousands of Quake fans waiting impatiently for over two years. As you read this, Unreal should finally have shipped from distributor Epic Megagames. Lose touch with reality at www.unreal.com.


## MAGICPADS

Naturally, you've already decked yourself out with Magic T-shirts, card boxes, counters, calendars and Black Lotus tattoos, so your only remaining accessory is the official Magic: The Gathering mousepad from Graphic Finishers of America ( $\$ 9.95$ each). Lest you think you can sate your appetite with but one mousepadand they are limited editions-know that there are six in the first series, featuring the likes of the Rathi Dragon, the Weatherlight, Black Lotus, Morinfen, Commander Greven itVec and our old buddy, the Juzam Djinn. According to Michael Rokop at Graphic Finishers of America, a web page is imminent. In the meantime, call toll-free 1 (800) 325-9333 for more information.

## IMPERIAL WALKERS BARE ALL

Ever wonder what Luke blew up inside that Imperial Walker with his grenade? Now you can fully visualize the carnage as you gaze into the inner recesses of the Empire's All-Terrain Armored Transport. The latest in Sci-Pub Tech's series of Star Wors posters, this huge, $36^{\prime \prime}$-by-24" AT-AT and Snowspeeder Cutaway Poster reveals the interior of not only the imperial Walker, but one of Rogue Squadron's snowspeeders. Sci-Pub Tech is offering a regular print for $\$ 19.95$, and a $\$ 40$ deluxe edition on heavy paper-signed and numbered by the artist-which comes with a Certificate of Authenticity. To get your poster, visit your favorite specialty shop or www.scipubtech.com/.

## HEMMOFCHATLUK

Okay, so it isn't really a Magic card-hell, it isn't even an LSR card-but we defy anyone facing you across the game table not to be intimidated when you appear wearing this 20 gauge steel samurai helmet made by the craftsmen at Valentine Armouries. This particular beauty was a special order that went for $\$ 800$ samolians. Depending on your own personal tastes, the lacing on the neck piece comes in several different colors, and the fierce black mempos, or mask, can be any design you want. They'll be happy to work with you to create something truly unique. Contact Valentine Armouries through thelr website at www.varmouries.com.

## WHITE WOLFTOA"T"

White Wolf is producing a new T-shirt. Guess what color it is. G'wan, guess! Chartreuse? Mauve, maybe? Turquoise? Silly person! If it's from White Wolf, basic black is the only possible answer. Now avaulable in big'n beefy size is the official Trinity Tee (\$17.95), featuring a Leif Jones illustration of the Psions defending the Fon Trinity from Aberrants and other futuristic nasties. For more info, visit White Wolf Game Studio at wuw.white-wolf.com.


## Tracking trends in the card game market

Onee again, people, this is "Gardstock," and I am former lowa resident Lars Peerson, the only man in the gaming industry with rabbií traphies in his offiese. Ge figerre.

First, a quickie: D日OMTOWN, a new ECG tased largely on the Wild West and poker, is selling strong, but singles trading remains syrupy because the booster packs, each with threes rares, are giving consumers terrific valve for your money while simultanewisly crushting Doomatiwr's overall market value. By the way, don't ignore the Joker, a card that is of course will, doess't ceunt toward your desk allotment of 52 tards and is your best asset during gunfights.

Second, consider Magig. Aside from the news that STROWGHOLD is the most volatile Magic expansion right now (a'mon, like ya didn't know), the cards on players' ninds this month are:

- MOX DIAMOMO (Stronghold)-Yveryone's out to get a Mox Diarroud, that fusterful, manageneratugg gem with the darnnable limintation that you have to pitch a lasd to bring it itito pliay. It finally dawned on players that Harvest Wurme, a common Weatherlity card, can return any basis land card from your graveyard to your hand, offsetting the loss. There's no way the common Wurm will goup in pries, but the new strategy has made Mox Dianond a mere popular diantend than the Pink Panther.
- ROLLIME STOMES (Stronghtoita)-Like comedian Stephen Wright, we love the Stones. All the Stones. The rock band. Fred and Barney, And now, players love Rolling Stones, one of the more undorrated Stronghoid cards. It allows walls to attack, turning formerly passive cards like Sun Web (Mirage) and Garnuvorous Plant (fourth Edition, The Dark) into mobile barryers of terror.
- Metalm (Stronghoio)-Surprisingly popular for an unsommon card, Megrim gives your oppenent two damage whenever he discards. The repented hits will make him cuss up a bluestreak, especially if you employ Prosperity (Visions), forcing him to draw and overloading his hand.
- TRADEWiHD RIDEAS (Tempest) - 1) Tap your Tradewind Rider, plas two other creatures you control; return a target permanent to its owner's hand. 2) Watch your opponent sweat blood.
- MECROPOTEMGE (Fifith Edition, Ise Age)-Let's be honost: Many Magic players are edsosssed with death, perhaps due to the pasty white camplexion they get from playing cards and never seeing the sun. But who're we to complain? Anytioo, Necropotence lets you set aside the top card of your library, then add it to your hand at the start of your next discarad plase-the foundation of the aptly-named Hecro deek.
- Bali LIGHTHING (Fourth Edifion, Finth Edlition, The Dart)-An old favorite because there's something satisfying about zapping your opponent, Ball Lightmang is augmented by the Stroughold common Fling, which lots you szerriee a creature and daal damage equal to its power.

That's all for now. Take cere, and in the worts of Shakespeare, "Cowards die many timas before thair deaths, the valiant only taste of Deathlase but once."

## PRICE GUIDE CONTRIBUTORS

A $\& 5$ Comics in Horth Bergen, NJ; Adventures in Comics \& Gemes in Cormikhaed, $C$; All About Books \& Comiss $Y$ in Tempe, AI: All Amerten Comis in Sil Loovis, MO; All Pro Sports in Mework, DE; Anmericon Comits \& Cards in Choitrarooys, II; Augusta Comics \& Cards in Cormel, IN, Aessin Books in Austin, TX, Barry's Collectors Corner in Grand Forks, HD; Bob's Hobbies in Springfield, MA, A Book Deal in Raswell, GA. Book \& Music Exchange in Loussille. XY Books Comits $\&$ Things in Ft Wayne, HiN; Books Golore in Erio, PA; Broipstorm Contics in Frederid, MD; Brendywine in West Chester, PA; Broudwoy Comiss in Yalitit, fL' Card \& Conmic Arcode in Hew York, NY, (ard \& Comic Empire in Hummzille, AL, The Cord \& Comic Shop in Port Lovaco, TX, Cerds, Coins \& Colleatibles in Moruoe, LA; Corids 8 Comics, Inc. in Twinsturg, OH; Costle Axchon in Etia, PA; Costle
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 Ward in Nonuet, NY; Yong \& Dell's Sperts Cords in Lecey, Wa; The Lone in Louisvile, KY


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## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE INQUEST PLAYERS GUIDE

The mflutust Players Guride is meant to serve as an aid in playing collectitle card games. Every month, you'll find the most extensive card deseripitions available for Magia: The Cathering, along with power ratings for every single card.

## THIS MONTH:



## SAMPLE LISTINC










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| B |  | Kind Sammon Dunn means dele Juzam 150 creature of he genus Dina ${ }^{\text {o }}$ |
| C |  | Descriplion libe desription of exactly what libe sard can do． |
| D |  | Flover Texi a funny or informatue quote |
| E |  | Artiss |
| $F$ |  | Costmg Cosi Mr Juzam cosls two black and two genear mono to summon Rio pioy |
| 6 |  | Exponsion Symbo．This teils you whot sel the cord belongs to，in lins rose the samuters meons he＇s from lime Arabion Nights sel |
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Posting




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# Swansore RIGX SWaN's undiue take on The wirid of baming 

## Love Story

Ah, cruel love. So succulent the experience, so bittersweet the memory. Seems like it happens this time every year: A warm wind on the cusp of summer with just a hint of fragrance, a delicious aroma that fills the nostrils with heaven-sent ecstasy permeates my entire being. Then without warning, the feeling worms its way to the pit of my stomach and clutches my gut like an angry fist, flooding my soul with the poison of a thousand crushed drearns.

And it takes two, three, maybe even four belts of Pepto Bismol to beat back the remnants of that triple garlic burrito. Man, them boys is tasty, but they're hard to digest.

Anyway, while lying semi-conscious, waiting for the nausea to subside, my mind drifts back to another love, the love of a girl-no, a woman-her hair
like spun silk, her skin the color of cherry blossoms. Plus, according to the "Price Guide," she was worth $\$ 6$, which is nothing to sneeze at.

Her name: Serra Angel.
I can still hear her voice, soft as a summer rain.
"Oh, El Swano," she purred. "May I call you El?"
"Yes, darling," I said, pulling her close, caressing her cool flatness, my lips brushing her cardboard cheek. "By the way, are you really worth six bucks... and rising?"
"Yes, my sweet."
My heart beat a little faster.
Time evaporated in a whirlwind of bliss. What intoxicating memories! During thesday, we picnicked in the park, strolled among the quaint bistros and little curio shops and pledged our undying devotion to each other with
 gentle touches and lingering kisses. At night, we walked arm and arm on the beach under a starry sky, taking care not to let the moist sea air warp her back.

And then, as suddenly as it began, it was over.

The fateful day is etched on my memory, a day I shall never forget. No matter how hard I try, no matter how much I struggle to purge my heart of the dull throbbing ache, it never goes away.

It was a Tuesday. I'd been told to go home early at my job as human bait at Gator World. The gators were striking in solidarity with their brethren at United Parcel Service, so we all got to go home at three o'clock. I couldn't
wait to share my extra time with Serra. I went straight to her apartment to be with her.

It was a mistake. Then again, perhaps it was Fate's way of showing me the inevitable. Who can say?

I burst in without knocking. "Serra, honey," I said. "Good newsl" My heart sank, and the life drained from my body as the scene burned into my brain, a scene l've replayed a thousand times, a million times, a scene from a nightmare.

Serra Angel was in bed. In bed... with an Atog.

I stood there, flabbergasted, not knowing what to do or say. Flushed with embarrassment, Serra scrambled for her clothes. The Atog slithered out from under the sheets, grinned at me, then pulled on his shorts and trotted for the door. I didn't try to stop him. I was numb.

Moments passed. Neither Serra nor I moved. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, I spoke.
"Why, Serra?" I choked, a single tear rolling down my cheek. "Why?"

She stiffened and swallowed hard. "You know why. We're too different, you and I."
"You mean ...?"
She took a breath. "Yes. You're a game geek."

I was stunned as the icy chill of reality crept over me. I could see the truth in her eyes. The magic was gone, the flame of love that once had burned as bright as the sun had been snuffed out. Besides, she'd allowed herself to be groped by an Atog. I mean ... yecch.

Still, one question remained. "Serra ..." I began, fumbling for the words.

She softened. "Yes, El?"
Her pet name for mel I winced at the sound. But I had to go on. "Serra ..."
"Yes?"
"By any chance," I asked, "do you have Bayushi Kachiko's home phone number?"

Hey, can you blame a guy for asking?
Rick Swan eventually married an actual woman who, unfortumately, is not flat.


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    - You may only ally with players of your typp--noble or failen. Howaver, you may oppose any type of clan.
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